

# Internationalization-at-Home: Students' Perspectives

Case: Lahti University of Applied Sciences

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Dang, Thanh

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## ABSTRACT

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Higher education systems across the world have developed their international dimensions in response to globalization. In Finland, higher education institutes commit to providing their students with global, international, and intercultural opportunities. These opportunities can be achieved via such abroad programs as ERASMUS. However, the number of students remaining in home universities during their whole study time is high. This raises the question on how these non-mobile students can develop their international and intercultural competencies without leaving their home campuses. This thesis's topic focuses on the solution to the above challenge, i.e. internationalization-at-home (IaH).

The case organization of this work is Lahti University of Applied Sciences (Lahti UAS). The intent of this research is to collect students' opinions about international extra-curricular activities and internationalized curriculum at Lahti UAS, and propose suggestions on future improvements at Lahti UAS's IaH based on students' perspectives. The approach of the thesis is deductive, and the research methods utilized are both qualitative and quantitative. Specifically, students' opinions about international extra-curricular activities are gathered via surveys, and insightful students' points of view on the internationalized curriculum are gained via interviews. The results from the two research support the answers to the problem questions of the thesis.

In conclusion, the findings reveal students' perceptions on how IaH benefits them, and confirms the importance of IaH at Lahti UAS. The empirical results and recommendations for IaH proposed in the thesis are beneficial to Lahti UAS's future development. It is also essential to carry out further research on this topic such as benchmarking best practices of IaH, and studying staff members and international students' perspectives of IaH.

Key words: internationalization of higher education, internationalization-at-home, Lahti UAS, Finland, student

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## GLOSSARY

<b>International student</b>	A student who is not a citizen of the country in which s/he is enrolled to study in
<b>Foreign student</b>	
<b>Mobile student</b>	
<b>Domestic student</b>	A student studying in his/her own country
<b>Native student</b>	
<b>Local student</b>	
<b>Home student</b>	A student that is studying at his/her home institute where s/he has enrolled for a full degree
<b>Degree student</b>	A student who has the right to get a degree from his/her institute and usually study full-time at the institute
<b>Full-time student</b>	
<b>Non-degree student</b>	A student who takes part in courses at a host institute and receives transferrable university credits, but s/he has no right to get a degree from the host institute
<b>Non-mobile student</b>	A student who only stays at his/her enrolled university the whole study time without leaving the country for neither exchange program nor internships abroad
<b>Learning outcomes</b>	Knowledge, skills, and competencies that a student gains through learning

## ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

CIMO	Centre for International Mobility
EACEA	Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
EAIE	European Association for International Education
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
ERASMUS	European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students
FUAS	Federation of Universities of Applied Sciences
HEI	Higher Educational Institute
IaH	Internationalization-at-home
Lahti UAS	Lahden ammattikorkeakoulu Lahti University of Applied Sciences
LAMKO	Lahden AMK:n Opiskelijakunta Student Union of Lahti UAS
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WHO	World Health Organization

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the topic of the thesis and its background information. Research questions and research methodologies are explained. Moreover, limitations of the thesis are listed in a sub-chapter.

### 1.1 Background information of the thesis

Globalization is an ongoing process that has been reshaping the world. The process has forced changes in economy, technology, politics, culture, environment, and connections among nations and societies (WHO, 2015). In addition, education, nowadays, is considered as a part of the globalization process. Since relations among countries are improved, and educational policies are reformed, more students are sent abroad to study. This is one of the factors that lead to the booming demand for overseas education. Specifically, in the higher education sector, there was a significant growth in student mobility during the period of 1975 and 2012. The total number of foreign students in 2012 was more than five times higher than in 1975. (OECD 2014, 344.) Yet the number is expected to rise in future (Altbach, Reisberg, and Rumbley 2009, VI).

In the last ten years, high rates of participation, internationalization, and intense global competition have influenced higher education worldwide (Sursock and Smidt 2010, 6). Knowledge has become a commodity (Mitchell and Nielsen 2012, 5). Education, as a result, could be considered as a service in which the educational institute is the seller, and the student is the consumer. The high demand for education abroad has brought an enormous opportunity for educational providers to enhance their financial status. Typically, higher education institutes have been gaining profits from tuition fees paid by the international students (Altbach, Reisberg, and Rumbley 2009, IX).

In response to global trends, the Bologna Process, joined by 47 European countries, was founded in order to reorganize, improve, and harmonize higher education systems in Europe. The Bologna Process has put a

profound impact on European universities to reform their strategies. One of the objectives of the Bologna Process is internationalization. According to the “Trends 2010: A decade of change in European Higher Education” report (2010, 73), 61% of the surveyed European universities claimed that internationalization was the third most important factor that shaped their strategies; additionally, a majority of respondents believed that internationalization would become the first most important development in the near future. The report also revealed that there were an increasing number of universities that integrated internationalization into teaching, learning and research environment, and activities. (Sursock and Smidt 2010, 73.)

In Finland, the situation is similar. Internationalizing higher education institutes is a national policy objective (Välimaa et al. 2013, 13). According to the Ministry of Education (2009, 17), *“participation in the globalisation of education, science and technology and influencing it in the EU, OECD, UNESCO and in other international forums is in the best financial and cultural interest of Finland.”* The policy makers aim to make Finland’s society, economy, and higher education institutes gain competitiveness via internationalization. Specifically, Finland is in need of highly educated labor force, and foreign intelligence resource. (Ministry of Education 2009, 15.) This is also why the number of incoming full-time students to Finland increased dramatically in the past decade (from 8,000 students in 2003 to nearly 20,000 students in 2012) (Garam and Korkala 2013, 5). On the other hand, Finnish young generations should be able to improve their language and cultural skills in order to support their position in the labor market, as well as develop their perception of global responsibility (Ministry of Education 2009, 17). However, the number of Finnish students going abroad to study remained low. Specifically, outbound students in higher education of Finland had always accounted for less than 6% of the total students annually. (Garam and Korkala 2013, 5.) This has raised a question on how the rest of Finnish students, who do not study abroad at all, can receive international education, understand different cultures and people from different countries, and be able to experience the world

outside of Finland. In other words, this is the question about “internationalization-at-home” (IaH) in higher education. (Crowther et al. 2000, 1.)

Lahti University of Applied Sciences, which is also known as Lahti UAS, is facing the same situation (only 9 – 13% of Lahti UAS students head abroad annually). In spring 2014, **Multicultural Niemi Campus Project** was created. The project aimed to study the level of student involvements in activities at Niemi Campus, and to implement promotions in order to increase the multiculturalism of this new campus. The project was a part of an associated work between Lahti UAS and Lahti Region Development LADEC Oy. The author was in charge of the project as her internship work. The internship was closely related to internationalization of higher education, especially the IaH and its underlying issues. The author was inspired by the topic, and decided to carry out a thesis work on this matter which could benefit her own university and other interested audiences.

## 1.2 Research questions and main objectives

The first objective of this research work is to collect students’ opinions about international and intercultural education and activities provided by Lahti UAS. Secondly, the data is analyzed in order to determine proper promotion methods to improve the IaH of Lahti UAS.

The main research questions are:

### **What can be done to improve internationalization-at-home of Lahti UAS?**

Sub questions are developed to support the answers to the main research questions:

- What is internationalization of higher education?
- What is internationalization-at-home of higher education?
- What is the situation of transnational higher education in Europe?

- What is the situation of internationalization of higher education in Finland?
- What is Lahti UAS's international strategy in terms of education?
- What are students' opinions about the internationalization-at-home of Lahti UAS (internationalized curriculum and international extra-curricular activities)?

### 1.3 Research methods and data collection

Concerning how to design a research, the first step is to select a proper approach. There are two types of research approaches, i.e. inductive and deductive reasoning. A research uses inductive approach when data is collected and analyzed, and then (new) theory is concluded. The process is considered as building theory. On the contrary, it is deductive when a theory and/or a hypothesis is first developed, and then the empirical research is created in order to test the theory and/or the hypothesis. (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009, 124.) According to the topic, a deductive approach suits this thesis best.

The second step in designing the empirical part is to determine which research method(s) are to be used. The techniques consist of quantitative and qualitative methods. Basically, quantitative research provides statistics and data from numerous respondents (Hollensen 2011, 181). A quantitative research can be descriptive or explanatory. Specifically, a descriptive study can *“portray an accurate profile of persons, events or situations”* (Robson 2002, 59), while an explanatory research studies relationships among variables (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009, 140). On the other hand, a qualitative method helps researchers understand reasons and motives of the research problems by receiving information from a few respondents (Hollensen 2011, 181). Qualitative technique is often used in exploratory studies that aim *“to seek new insights; to ask questions and to assess phenomena in a new light”* (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009, 140). In order to make an exploratory study, *“a search of the literature; interviewing experts in the subject;”* or *“conducting focus*

*group interviews*” could be applied (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009, 140). For more information regarding the differences between quantitative and qualitative research methods, see Table 1. Moreover, a study can use either a single research method (mono method) or multiple methods to collect primary data. The latter option involves both quantitative and qualitative techniques. (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009, 151.) With respect to this thesis, the author would like to provide in-depth answer to the research questions; therefore, multiple methods are selected to gather the data, and the data is analyzed qualitatively.

TABLE 1. Quantitative versus qualitative research (Hollensen 2011, 182).

<b>Comparison dimension</b>	<b>Quantitative research (e.g. a postal questionnaire)</b>	<b>Qualitative research (e.g. a focus group interview or the case method)</b>
<b>Objective</b>	To quantify the data and generalise the results from the sample to the population of interest	To gain an initial and qualitative understanding of the underlying reasons and motives
<b>Type of research</b>	Descriptive and/or casual	Exploratory
<b>Flexibility in research design</b>	Low (as a result of a standardised and structured questionnaire: one-way communication)	High (as a result of the personal interview, where the interviewer can change questions during the interview: two-way communication)
<b>Sample size</b>	Large	Small
<b>Choice of respondents</b>	Representative sample of the population	Persons with considerable knowledge of the problem (key informants)
<b>Information per respondents</b>	Low	High
<b>Data analysis</b>	Statistical summary	Subjective, interpretative

Choosing proper research techniques is very important. Since the author chooses multiple method approach, the thesis uses both qualitative and quantitative techniques to collect primary data, namely, survey and interview. Survey is said to be the most popular strategy which helps answer questions such as who, what where, how much and how many. Thus, it provides researchers with quantitative statistics which can be analyzed to show patterns and relationships between variables. (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009, 144.) Moreover, questionnaire technique is applied in the study as it is one of the appropriate tools of survey strategy. Figure 1 illustrates different types of questionnaires. The questionnaire in this paper is self-administered, which means the questionnaires are answered by the respondents themselves via computer. (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009, 362.)

Beside questionnaire, interview technique is also utilized for the research. Specifically, there are three types of interviews, i.e. structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, and unstructured interviews. Specifically, structured interviews are often used to collect data for quantitative research. The interviewees are asked the same questions and in the same order. Thus, this type is also called “standardized interviews.” On the other hand, semi-structured and unstructured interviews are non-standardized, and are less formal than the former. They are used to gather data for quantitative analysis, and to answer to questions of what, how and why. The typical difference between these non-standardized interview forms is that the researcher needs to prepare a set of questions or main points that are going to be discussed for semi-structured interviews; while in unstructured interviews, the researcher does not need to have the questions beforehand. Regarding how the interviews can be carried out, interview can be individual or group interview, and the means are face-to-face meeting, telephone, and online methods such as email, online messaging. (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009, 320 – 322.) The author

chooses semi-structured interview via face-to-face meetings to collect data for her thesis.

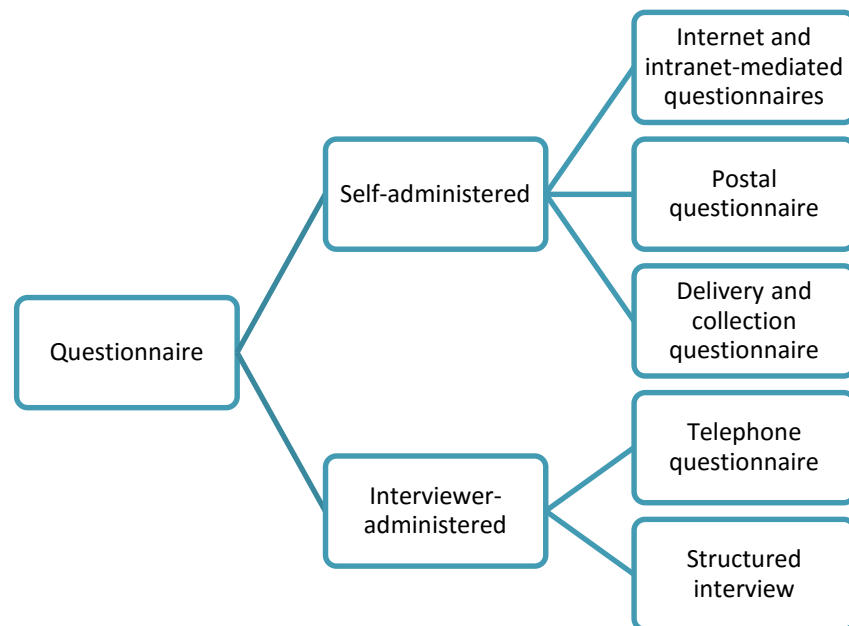


FIGURE 1. Types of questionnaires (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009, 363).

In this study, both primary and secondary data is used. While primary data is provided by the empirical research results, the secondary data, which is information and definitions, is collected from the academic articles, journals, reports, books, and trusted online sources.

#### 1.4 Thesis limitation

The target population of this thesis is the Bachelor's Degree students in all six faculties of Lahti UAS; thus, the Master's Degree students are left out. Moreover, due to the tight timeline of the project in which the survey was made, the online survey was opened in a week. There were no follow-up reminders sent to target population because of complicated survey distribution process. Additionally, the survey was available only in English.

## 1.5 Thesis structure

The thesis is divided into eight parts. The first chapter introduces the background of the thesis ideas and research questions, objectives, and explanation of the research methods. The second chapter provides readers with basic definitions and interpretations of terminologies that are related to the topic and used throughout the thesis, as well as theoretical review about internationalization in higher education and internationalization-at-home. The third chapter focuses on trends and development of international higher education. The information is presented on three levels: worldwide, Europe, and Finland. The fourth chapter includes information of the case organization. The fifth chapter continues with the results of the empirical research. The sixth chapter discusses the research findings, and recommendations on how to promote the internationalization-at-home of Lahti UAS are proposed. The seventh chapter presents the answers to the research questions, and suggestions for further research. Finally, the eighth chapter summarizes the main points of the thesis.



## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The chapter is dedicated to providing theoretical knowledge of the topic, such as basic terminologies that are related to the education sector. The concepts of internationalization and internationalization-at-home of higher education are also explained.

### 2.1 Terminologies

In order to understand the research fully, definitions and explanations of related terminologies should be mentioned. In particular, such concepts as “internationalization” and “globalization” are often misunderstood.

Therefore, this chapter provides readers with basic understanding and interpretations of terms that concern the internationalization in education sector, and particularly, in higher education institutes.

#### 2.1.1 Globalization versus internationalization

Globalization definitions have been proposed in several research papers. For instance, Knight (1999) defined globalization as *“the flow of technology, economy, knowledge, people, values, ideas... across borders. Globalisation affects each country in a different way due to a nation’s individual history, traditions, culture, and priorities”* (Knight 1999, 6).

Whereas, Van Damme (1999) suggested that globalization refers to *“forceful changes in the economic, social, political and increasingly also cultural environment characterized by global competition, integration of markets, mobility, communication networks and information flows”* (Van Damme 1999, 3). Nations, which apply global integration policies, are influenced by globalization since the movement of, for example, technology, economy, knowledge, and people, is free among those countries (WHO, 2015). Due to globalization, there is an improvement in the quantity and quality of interconnections among nations (Mitchell and Nielsen 2012, 5). Moreover, globalization is described as *“a relatively uncontrolled process,”* and its determinants are global economic

competition, and betterment of information and communication technology (Crowther et al. 2000, 10).

Although globalization and internationalization have a very strong relationship, it is important to note that they cannot be used as synonyms. While globalization is considered as an “*uncontrolled process*,” internationalization is a more conscious process that can be disciplined. Some might think internationalization is a mini phenomenon of globalization. In fact, globalization acts more like a “*catalyst*” to the development of a certain country, and internationalization is how the country responds. (Knight 1999, 14.) In a globalized world, in order to get economic, social, political, and cultural benefits, individual or organizations must internationalize (Mitchell and Nielsen 2012, 10). Moreover, the role of governments, nations, and cultures are much more important in the concept of internationalization, while globalization “*ignores or transcends the order of nation states altogether*” (Reichert and Wächter 2000, 33). Crowther (2000, 9) also claims that globalization influences internationalization profoundly and increasingly.

### 2.1.2 Multicultural, cross-cultural, and intercultural definitions

In informal daily speech, people tend to use these terms interchangeably in order to express the cultural diversity level of a certain community or organization. Although these terms might bear a similarity, their academic definitions are actually different. Figure 2 demonstrates the differences among meanings of multicultural, cross-cultural, and intercultural.

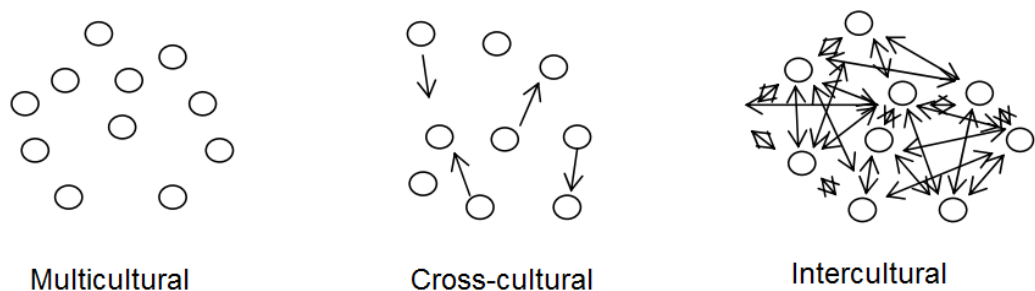


FIGURE 2. Demonstrating models of multicultural, cross-cultural, and intercultural communities (The United Church of Canada, 2011).

In a **multicultural** society or community, there are two or more distinct cultural group present. A multicultural community is often found in educational contexts; for example, a multicultural classroom where there are students from different cultures. However, people from different cultures might feel isolated when standing together. Within multicultural events, social interaction is often polite and superficial. Whereas in a **cross-cultural** community, people attempt to create connections between cultural groups by intentionally listening, learning, and willing to change or adapt. These actions can also be stimulated by education and community building. Nevertheless, people tend to take comparing actions between cultures, and define which culture is superior or inferior to another. Significant changing or transformation from one to another culture is limited in a cross-cultural community. Lastly, **intercultural** signifies that there are deeper connections, mutuality, respect, understanding, and acceptance among cultural groups. In other words, this term often refers to interaction, communication, and engagement in a culturally diverse society or community. People of a certain intercultural community build stronger relationships, and through these relationships they learn more about each other. Since people are more affected by other cultures, there appears to be a willingness to be changed, reshaped, or molded. (Miladinovic 2015; Di Camporotondo 2015; The United Church of Canada 2011.)

Furthermore, as the term intercultural emphasizes on interaction and communication, it is often used in education in terms of students' skills or competencies. Intercultural competence is defined as the *"ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes."* (Deardorff 2006, 247.)

### 2.1.3 Educational terms related to internationalization

When speaking of internationalization of higher education, there are several related collocations, namely transnational education, global education, intercultural education, and multicultural education. It is easy to follow this thesis if these terms are correctly understood. To begin with, **transnational education** is defined as “*all types of higher education study programs, or sets of courses of study, or educational services (including those of distance education) in which the learners are located in a country different from the one where the awarding institution is based*” (Council of Europe, 2001). Transnational is an adjective that could be used as a synonym of cross-border (Knight 2004, 8). There are eight common types of transnational education, such as franchising, program articulations, branch campus, offshore, large corporations, international institutions, distance-learning, virtual universities. The first one, is franchising, which includes two higher education institutions in different countries as a franchiser and a franchisee. Under this mode, the franchiser grants the franchisee the permission to use its study programs in teaching the franchisee’s own students. Program articulations refer to the cooperation between two or more institutions in order to create a joint educational program; and under which the students of an institution can have their credits transferred or recognized by the other cooperating schools. Branch campus, which is another type of transnational education, is established in another country to provide its own study programs. Moreover, an institution that is called offshore is founded in one particular country, although this institution belongs to the education system of another country. The fifth form is large corporations whose network is worldwide and whose educational institutions and qualifications do not belong to any specific education systems. In addition, international institutions are those which offer international study programs, and whose campuses operate in many countries. Lastly, distance-learning and virtual universities are the new methods of transnational education. The concept is to provide education to students or students who are separated from the educators

via post or web-based means, and the learners usually self-study.  
(Hussain 2007, 165 – 166.)

The second term to be interpreted is **global education**. According to the “Global Education in Europe to 2015” paper (Council of Europe 2002, 147), *“global education is education that opens people’s eyes and minds to the realities of the globalized world and awakens them to bring about a world of greater justice, equality and human rights for all.”* Activities of global education focus on providing citizens with guides to ethic responsibilities, encouraging national and international interaction, and mutual understanding. Additionally, global education must raise the awareness of limited natural resources, equipping citizens with knowledge and skills to understand and adapt to a globalized economy, creating incentives for people to *“work for a better world,”* and offering education related to human rights, equality, peace, intercultural understanding, and sustainable development (Ministry of Education 2007, 11).

Thirdly, **intercultural education** is said to emphasize diversity that includes social groups; for instance, gender, age, language, religion, race, and ethnicity. Knowledge of different lifestyles, customs, worldwide understanding, and especially, equality, human rights, as well as cultural discrimination are transmitted to learners via intercultural education. (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment 2006, i.) Some of the main aims of intercultural education are to provide learners with knowledge of their own culture and other cultures, to encourage their respect toward different ways of life, and to help learners know how to take action against prejudice and discrimination (Department of Education and Science 2002, 20). In order to ensure successful intercultural education, intercultural learning must be inspired via interventions such as *“curriculum design, including pre-departure, on-site, and re-entry, and/or course content emphasizing subjective culture and intercultural interaction, and/or the guided facilitation of intercultural experience”* (Bennett 2009, 8).

Finally, yet importantly, the term **multicultural education** is mentioned frequently, later in the paper. Multicultural education, also known as pluricultural education, is in fact very similar to intercultural education. Particularly, the primary objectives of this approach of teaching and learning are *“acknowledgement and respect of cultural diversity.”* (Portera 2008, 485.) The aims can be achieved by designing education and instruction of a wide range of different cultures for an education system, and ensuring the peculiarity and uniqueness of cultures in classroom atmospheres (Wilson, 2014). Additionally, James Banks (2001, 2) theorized that multicultural education offers *“equal educational opportunities for all students (...) from different racial, ethnic, and social-class groups.”* Banks also stated the learning opportunities in multicultural education are derived from *“changing the total school environment so that it will reflect the diverse cultures and groups within society and within the nation’s classrooms”* (Banks 2001, 2).

## 2.2 Internationalization of higher education

The usage of the term “internationalization” in higher education sector begun in the early 80’s. The definition introduced by Jane Knight 20 years ago is probably used most often in European Education Sector. She described *“internationalization as the process of integrating an international dimension into the research, teaching, and service functions of higher education”* (Knight 1994, 3). After that, Knight conducted a new definition of internationalization in one of her recent research paper. She proposes that *“internationalization at the national, sector, and institutional levels is defined as the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education”* (Knight 2003, 2).

The new definition is actually an updated version of the old one. Knight realized that the term “international dimension” is not sufficient to create a broad definition. Specifically, international refers to the *“relationship between and among nations, cultures, or countries.”* Intercultural indicates

the internationalization-at-home (see page 17 for definition), whereas global is used to describe something whose scale is worldwide. (Knight 2004, 11.) Moreover, since the national, sector, and institutional level are included in the updated definition, the words “purpose”, “functions”, and “delivery” are chosen to make the proposal broader and more general, whereas research, teaching and services are too specific to be used (Knight 2003, 3). Particularly, purpose is the goal or objective that a single higher education institute has to achieve for its own individual and/or for the country or region where it operates. Functions are the main capabilities and duties of a postgraduate system of a nation or a particular institute, such as teaching, training, researching, academic services and so on. Lastly, delivery includes the methods or approaches that are used to deliver the services, for example, courses and programs. (Knight 2004, 12.)

Knight also suggested that internationalization of higher education should be seen on different levels, i.e. national level, sector level, and institutional level. Different levels have their own policies toward internationalization, and the programs are made to bring the policies in force. Table 2 presents detail differences among the three levels, and their proposed programs in accordance with the policies. (Knight 2004, 16.)

TABLE 2. Policies and programs at all three levels (Knight 2004, 17).

Level	Policy	Programs
<b>National</b>	Education and other national-level policies relating to international dimension of higher education; other policy sectors include cultural, scientific, immigration, trade, employment, and culture	National or sub regional programs that promote or facilitate the international dimension of postsecondary education; can be provided by different government organizations; examples of programs include academic mobility programs, international research initiatives, and student recruitment programs
<b>Sector</b>	Policies related to the purpose, function, funding, and regulation of postsecondary education	Programs offered by and for the education sector specifically; can be provided by any level of government or by public or private organizations
<b>Institutional</b>	Policies that address specific aspects of internationalization and/or policies that serve to integrate and sustain the international dimension into the primary mission and functions of the institution	Student exchange programs, foreign language study, internationalized curricula, area or thematic studies, work/study abroad, international students, teaching/learning process, joint/double-degree programs, cross-cultural training, faculty/staff mobility programs, visiting lectures and students, link between academic programs and other

In fact, activities of internationalization on the institutional level are categorized into two “*streams*” – at home and abroad. On the one hand, the stream that includes campus-based activities is called internationalization-at-home (IaH). On the other hand, internationalization abroad refers to activities that take place in another country. It is often related as transnational or cross-border education (see page 12 for definition). (Knight 2004, 16.) Since the thesis focuses on IaH, the next



chapter is dedicated to explaining more about this stream of internationalization.

### 2.3 Internationalization-at-home

Bengt Nilsson is known as the first person to conceptualize the term “internationalization-at-home” (IaH). Nilsson introduced the concept in an article called “Internationalization-at-home – theory and praxis,” in which he pointed out that less than 10% of European higher education students went abroad to study although there had been funded programs to encourage student mobility such as ERASMUS, etc. He raised a question on how the other non-mobile students could receive international education, and develop their international and intercultural competencies (see page 20 for definition). The matter was presented at a Forum of the European Association for International Education (EAIE), and it was welcomed by the audience, as well as the association. Later on, the IaH Special Interest Group was founded within the EAIE. The group aimed to spread the concept of IaH, and to benchmark good practices on how to internationalize non-mobile students. (Crowther et al. 2000, 1; Wächter 2003, 6.)

According to Nilsson (2003, 31), *“internationalisation-at-home is any internationally related activity with the exception of outbound student mobility.”* In contrast to internationalization abroad, IaH encourages students to attain intercultural competencies without leaving their origin universities (Crowther et al. 2000, 10). In Knight’s words (2008, 22), IaH reflects *“those aspects of internationalization which would happen on a home campus.”* Additionally, IaH was also theorized as *“a set of instruments and activities ‘at home’ that focus on developing international and intercultural competences in all students”* (Beelen and De Wit 2012, 10). This IaH concept was later revised as *“the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments”* (De Wit et al. 2015, 49; according to Beelen and Jones 2015). As it is easier to

understand and the definition has been recently conducted, the author decides that the above IaH definition is the best one to be used for this thesis.

Moreover, while Nilsson's IaH concept (2003) only emphasized on the internationalization of the curriculum and teaching/learning processes, Knight believed that IaH should be involved in other fields as well. IaH activities could be included in "*curriculum and programs, teaching/learning processes, extra-curricular activities, liaison with local cultural/ethnic groups, and research and student activity*" (Knight 2008, 23). Table 3 lists the IaH activities in each area proposed by Knight. Furthermore, IaH often involves exchange students, home students (including international and domestic degree students), and home teachers and institute staff (Crowther et al. 2000, 16); yet only the IaH on the perspectives of the student groups is analyzed and discussed in the thesis.

TABLE 3. IaH activities under five categories (Knight 2008, 23).

Category	Activities
<b>Curriculum and programs</b>	New programs with international themes; the infusion of international, cultural, global, or comparative dimensions into existing courses; foreign language study; area or regional studies; and joint or double degrees.
<b>Teaching/learning processes</b>	The active involvement of international students, returned study-abroad students, and cultural diversity in the classroom in teaching/learning processes; virtual student mobility for joint courses and research projects; the use of international students and teachers and local international/intercultural experts; and the integration of international materials, international materials, intercultural case studies, role-plays, and reference materials.
<b>Extra-curricular activities</b>	Student clubs and associations; international and intercultural campus events; liaison with community-based cultural and ethnic groups; and peer support groups and programs.
<b>Liaison with local cultural/ethnic groups</b>	The involvement of students in local cultural and ethnic organizations through internships, placements, and applied research; and the involvement of representatives from local cultural and ethnic groups in teaching/learning activities, research initiatives, and extracurricular events and projects.
<b>Research and student activity</b>	Area and theme centers; joint research projects; international conferences and seminars; published articles and papers; international research agreements; research exchange programs; international research partners in academic and other sectors; and the integration of visiting researchers and students into academic activities on campus.

According to Knight's definition of internationalization explained in the previous subchapter, global, international, intercultural dimensions must be involved in higher education activities (Knight 2003, 2). It is observed that there is an increasing number of higher education institutes that seek to develop their students' global, international, and intercultural (GII) competencies as a response to globalization (Burnett and Huisman 2010, 117). The GII competencies constitute *"knowledge about several*

*dimensions of global and international cultures; appreciation of cultural, racial, and ethnic diversity; understanding of the complexities of issues in a global context; and comfort in working with people from other cultures”* (Soria and Troisi 2014, 262). It is said that people who possess GII dimensions are likely to have both easy personal life and effective working life, as well as they are likely to have strong leadership in a global context (Soria and Troisi 2014, 262; Earnest 2003, 47). Additionally, internationalization-at-home and internationalization abroad both share the same goal, i.e. to help students develop their GII competencies (Beelen 2011, 251; Hayle 2008, 4). However, IaH is found to have better effects than internationalization abroad in terms of internationally developing students (Soria and Troisi 2014, 273). Not all higher education students are able to join international exchange programs where they can spend a period abroad to gain GII competencies; in other words, internationalization abroad only reaches a fraction of the student population. Whereas IaH aims to help **all** higher education students achieve international and intercultural dimensions, and to ensure that returning students from international exchange programs have opportunities to *“integrate their study abroad experiences and provide alternative international experiences at home for those who choose not to study abroad.”* (Nilsson 2003, 31-34; Steglitz and Briggs 2005, 11.)

All students can achieve GII competencies via internationalized curriculum and international extra-curricular activities as these are the two main aspects of IaH (Hayle 2008, 4). First, an internationalized curriculum is defined as *“a curriculum which gives international and intercultural knowledge and abilities, aimed at preparing students for performing (professionally, socially, and emotionally) in an international and multicultural context”* (Nilsson 2003, 31). Additionally, internationalized curriculum is said to be an outcome of a process called “internationalization of curriculum” which is defined as *“the incorporation of an international and intercultural dimension into the preparation, delivery, and outcomes of a program of study.”* The internationalized curriculum aims to *“engage students with internationally informed research and*

*cultural and linguistic diversity and purposefully develop the international and intercultural perspectives as global professionals and citizens.”* (Leask 2009, 209.) Moreover, an internationalized curriculum must meet two objectives, namely “*cognitive objectives*” (providing international competence) and “*attitude-related objectives*” (providing intercultural competence). Table 4 lists the examples of what an internationalized curriculum should offer students. (Crowther et al. 2000, 23.) It is stated that participation in lectures and formal curricular activities whose themes are international or global related can foster students’ intercultural competence as their awareness of cultural diversity is developed (Soria and Troisia 2014, 274; according to Deardorff 2009).

TABLE 4. Examples of what an internalised curriculum should contain (Crowther et al. 2000, 23).

<b>Cognitive objectives (international competence)</b>	<b>Attitude-related objectives (intercultural competence)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foreign languages</li> <li>• Regional and area studies</li> <li>• Humanities and subjects such as international law and international business</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad-mindedness</li> <li>• Understanding and respect for other people and their cultures</li> <li>• Values and ways of living</li> <li>• Understanding the nature of racism</li> </ul>

Secondly, extra-curricular activities play an important role in benefiting students’ GII competencies (see Table 3 on page 19 for examples of extra-curricular activities). The research of Soria and Troisi (2014) suggests that IaH is an alternative to studying abroad because students can enhance their GII competencies at home by taking part in international extra-curricular activities on campus in which there are also participation of students from different cultures. The presence of international students is

said to contribute to the intercultural and international dimension of a HEI to some degree (Christensen and Thielen 1983, 210; Mellors-Bourne 2013, 97; De Wit 2015, 49). In addition, *“intercultural learning at home can initiate the development of positive attitudes toward other cultures, and behavioural skills to act efficiently and adequately in an intercultural context”* (Crowther et al. 2000, 18). Students could also find themselves confident and comfortable in engaging with foreign schoolmates via international activities (Crowther et al. 2000, 17; Soria and Troisia 2014, 274). In other words, interactions and relations with people of other cultural backgrounds help home students develop their GII competencies as they get to learn more of new cultures, be able to understand and tolerate differences and diversities (Soria and Troisia 2014, 274; according to Deardorff 2009). Hence, it is important to ensure that overseas students participate in such events. In fact, foreign students who arrive in the host country for the first time might face culture shock. It is suggested that new-coming students may withdraw into their *“own cultural colonies”* if they do not make close connections with other students of different cultural backgrounds (Crowther et al. 2000, 17). This is because newcomers usually have contacts only with people of their own cultural groups, but hardly with other international or domestic students. Moreover, if new students are isolated in their own cultural communities, there might be *“negative effects on their readiness for learning, their consciousness of relevant learning tasks and on their academic performances”* (Crowther et al. 2000, 17). Therefore, in order to prevent this and to ensure the activeness of international individuals, HEIs are recommended to have proper social support for the newcomers, and to make sure that foreign students get in touch with each other upon their arrival. Since the number of students that remain at home institutes during their whole study time is significantly high (about 95% in the case of Finland), there is a need to evaluate the IaH of a HEI, and to exploit the benefits that IaH could bring. (Crowther et al. 2000, 18.)

### 3 TRENDS IN TRANSNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION

This chapter presents statistics that describe the trends of transnational higher education, as well as their possible reasons. The information is divided in two main sections. Specifically, a summary of cross-border education trends on a worldwide scale is provided first, so that readers can picture the general situation. Secondly, the Bologna Process is mentioned as it is one of the main factors that changed the European higher education system. After that, as the thesis is related to Finland, trends of internationalization of postsecondary education in Finland are also studied.

#### 3.1 A worldwide view

The statistical data and information in this section are summarized from one of the latest publication of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) concerning education. As shown in Figure 3, there was a remarkable increase in the world total number of foreign students since the early stage when internationalization of education was first introduced, i.e. 4.5 million of foreign students were recorded in 2012 comparing to 0.8 million in 1975. (OECD 2014, 342). Additionally, it was predicted that by the end of 2020, the total foreign student population would raise to 7 million (Altbach 2009, VI). The increase in student mobility was said to indicate the improvement in relationships among countries (OECD 2014, 344). The average annual growth rate was reported to be 7% from 2000 to 2012 (OECD 2014, 342).

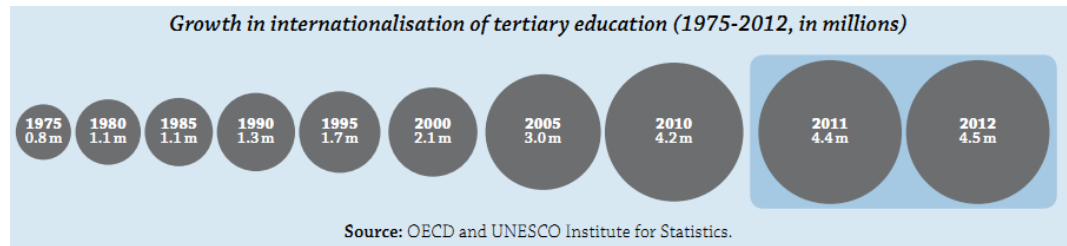


FIGURE 3. Long-term growth in the number of students enrolled outside their country of citizenship (OECD 2014, 344).

The booming demand for higher education worldwide and studying abroad was identified as reasons behind this upward trend. Moreover, national policies promoted student mobility, and encouraged them to follow study fields that were crucial to the development of certain industries in the origin country. Heavy marketing campaigns were created by educational institutes in order to attract foreign students. Even though the pattern of student mobility was very positive, it was expected that the growth might be decelerated in the future due to the weak global economy. (OECD 2014, 342.)

Statistical data showed that Europe, which received 48% of the total foreign students, was ranked as the top destination of tertiary education. North America took second place, and Asia was at the third place by hosting 21% and 18% of the total foreign students respectively. Furthermore, countries in Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean hosted more students from abroad in 2012, which indicated the expansion of internationalization in higher education in these emerging markets. Figure 4 presents the shares of international students hosted by country of destination in 2000 and 2012. In general, the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Australia, and Canada had over 50% of all foreign students in 2012. However, during the period of 2000 and 2012, the number of students enrolled in the United States and Germany decreased by 7% and 3% respectively. On the other hand, the United Kingdom, the Russian Federation, New Zealand, and Korea witnessed a



growth in the number of foreign students that they hosted. (OECD 2014, 343-344.)

The reasons why a foreign student chooses his/her country of destination for studying interested researchers. There were several factors that affected students' choices, and could explain the trends of tertiary education. The main factors were language of instruction, quality of study programs, and education fees. First, countries whose national languages were widely used around the globe (such as English, German, French, Spanish, and Russian) received more foreign students. Although Japanese was not among the most widely spoken languages, Japan still hosted a significant number of tertiary students who mostly came from Asia (94% of the total Japan's foreign students) (OECD 2014, 357.) Moreover, Figure 4 presents the trends in international education market shares of 18 OECD countries in 2000 and 2012. The popularity of English language was said to lead to the growing shares of foreign students in Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States from 2000 to 2012. Students who had studied English at home and intended to enhance their English skills had a higher tendency of enrolling in English-speaking countries. In addition, English-speaking students were likely to study in other countries whose official language was English. The report revealed that a quarter of the total foreign students in 2012 enrolled in tertiary education in countries that had the same national languages, or popular languages. As a result, non-English-speaking countries, such as Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, and Sweden, showed their adaptation to this trend by offering study programs conducted in English. (OECD 2014, 345-346.)

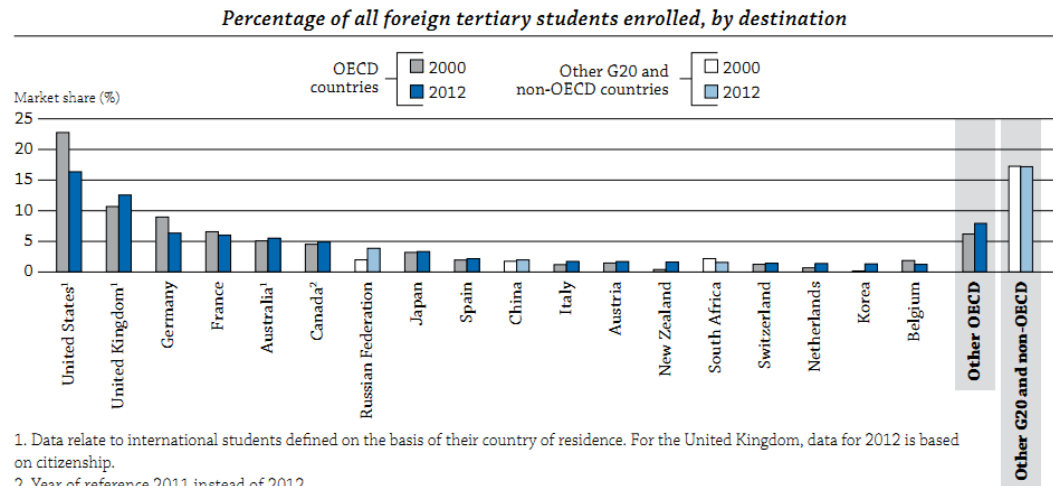


FIGURE 4. Trends in international education market shares in 2000 and 2012 (OECD 2014, 346).

Secondly, mobile students tended to be concerned of the quality of study programs offered by their chosen institution. Students' choice was affected by the information of a particular program, and the rankings of higher education institutions. The third underlying reason that affected the choice of education destination was education fees. Most of OECD and G20 countries applied higher tuition fees for foreign students than for domestic ones<sup>1</sup>. The decrease of foreign students to the United States was explained by the high tuition fees since students could enroll in cheaper destinations with a similar quality of study programs. In some other countries, international students paid the same amount of tuition fees as domestic students did<sup>2</sup>. In contrast, Finland, Iceland, and Norway did not charge any tuition fees to both foreign and domestic students. Therefore, a raising number of foreign students were observed in Finland, Iceland, and

<sup>1</sup> Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, the Russian Federation, Sweden, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States (OECD 2014, 348).

<sup>2</sup> France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Spain, Switzerland (OECD 2014, 348).

Norway during the period of 2000 and 2012 (see Appendix 1). (OECD 2014, 347-348; Garam and Korkala 2013, 4-5.)

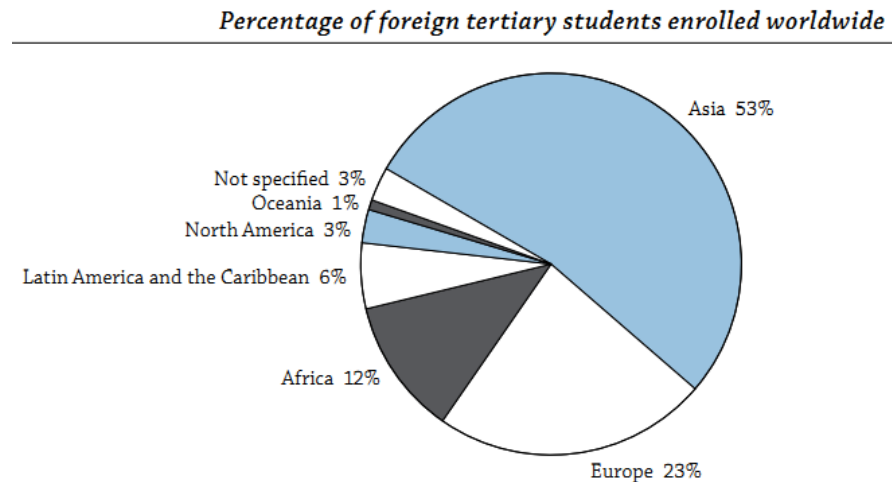


FIGURE 5. Distribution of foreign students in tertiary education, by region of origin in 2012 (OECD 2014, 351).

Concerning the place of origin, Figure 5 presents the distribution of foreign students in international education based on their origin. In 2012, about 53% of foreign students worldwide were Asians, and 22% of which were from China, and 5.8% of which were from India. Generally, most Asian students followed overseas studies in Australia, Canada, Japan, South Korea, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Furthermore, it was reported that a significant number of students studied in their neighboring countries (21% of the total foreign students). The countries which received more students from their neighbors were the Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Japan, Korea, and the Russian Federation. (OECD 2014, 350-351.)

### 3.2 Cross-border higher education in Europe and Finland

This part provides information of European higher education development and related policies, i.e. the Bologna Process. A brief report of internationalization in European higher education is also presented, as well as in Finland because the case of the thesis operates in this country.

#### 3.2.1 The Bologna Process in Europe

To begin with, it is vital to understand what has been changing the higher education systems of Europe. In mid-1998, the Sorbonne Declaration was signed by Italy, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. It was a joint declaration that regarded the Harmonization of the Architecture of the European Higher Education System. Sorbonne Declaration's primary purposes were to improve the study programs, the recognition of qualifications, and the mobility of students and educational staff, as well as design a common degree level system for bachelor, master, and doctoral degrees. One year later, another declaration called the Bologna Declaration, which was based on the previous one, was drafted together by the European Commission, the Council of Europe, universities, and European students. It was signed by 29 European countries. Modernizing and reforming the European higher education were the objectives of this second joint agreement. The reforming process which was named the Bologna Process helped reorganize and improve the higher education system of Europe. Beside aiming at developing the common higher education structure among the member states of the Bologna Declaration, enhancing the European education system's international competitiveness was also important. (EACEA P9 Eurydice 2010, 10.) Moreover, the Bologna Declaration planned to set up an association called the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) whose aim was to improve the internationalization in higher education across Europe. By 2012, there

were 47 European countries<sup>3</sup> that participated in this declaration, and they were all members of the EHEA that was established in 2010. Additionally, developments of the Bologna Process were reported and discussed in the conferences attended by the higher education ministries of the member countries. As outcomes of these meetings, achievements since the previous meeting were reviewed, and new directions and priorities were approved consensually in order to improve the performances of the Bologna Process in the future. (Crosier and Parveva 2013, 20.)

Since 1999, many noticeable achievements had been obtained throughout the Bologna Process. First, as an effort to standardize the study qualifications from different European higher education systems, the Bologna three-cycle structure (Bachelor-Master-PhD) was made. Specifically, students who wished to apply for Master degree must hold a Bachelor qualification. The Bachelor studies ought to last in at least three years, and range from 180 to 240 credits, while the Master level should be two years of workload, and the total credits were from 60 to 120 credits. The duration of PhD programs was from three to four years. On the other hand, some programs, such as medicine and related fields, theology, music and fine arts, did not follow the length of the Bologna three-cycle structure, i.e. they could last longer or shorter. (EACEA P9 Eurydice 2010, 16.) Educational information of 34 countries available is illustrated in Figure 6. Particularly, most of these countries still had long programs, while 11 countries had short programs. It was shown that study programs which did not follow the Bologna structure existed in 24 countries. Despite being members of the Bologna Process, Russia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia did not have any programs which were compatible with the Bologna structure. Germany (36%), Slovenia (31%), and Spain

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<sup>3</sup> Members of the Bologna Process: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium – Flemish Community, Belgium – French Community, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Holy Sea, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

(4%) were recorded as those that had the smallest numbers of students enrolled in the Bologna three cycles. (Crosier and Parveva 2013, 33-34.)

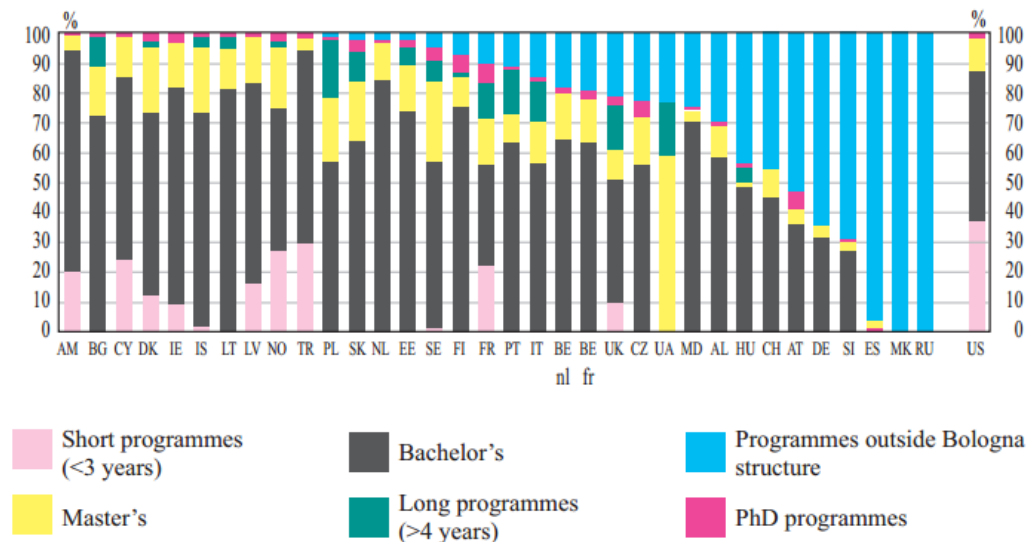


FIGURE 6. Percentage of students enrolled in programs following the Bologna three-cycle structures, by cycle, 2008/09 (Crosier and Parveva 2013, 33).

The formation of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) marked the second achievement of the Bologna Process. The ECTS was established in 1989 in order to ease the difficulties in credit transferring when students participated in exchange programs and/or tertiary education. Efforts had been made to transform the ECTS from a simple credit transfer system to a transfer and accumulation system. Credit accumulation was defined as *“the allocation of credit points to each component of a study program and determining the total number of credits needed for completion of the program”* (EACEA P9 Eurydice 2012, 49). The credit allocation could be based on either student-teacher contact hours, or student workload, or both student workload and learning outcomes. Moreover, the ministers had agreed that the ECTS were successfully implemented only when it was used in more than 75% of the

higher education programs and institutions for credit transfer and accumulation, and it should be linked with the learning outcomes and/or student workload. (EACEA P9 Eurydice 2010, 21.)

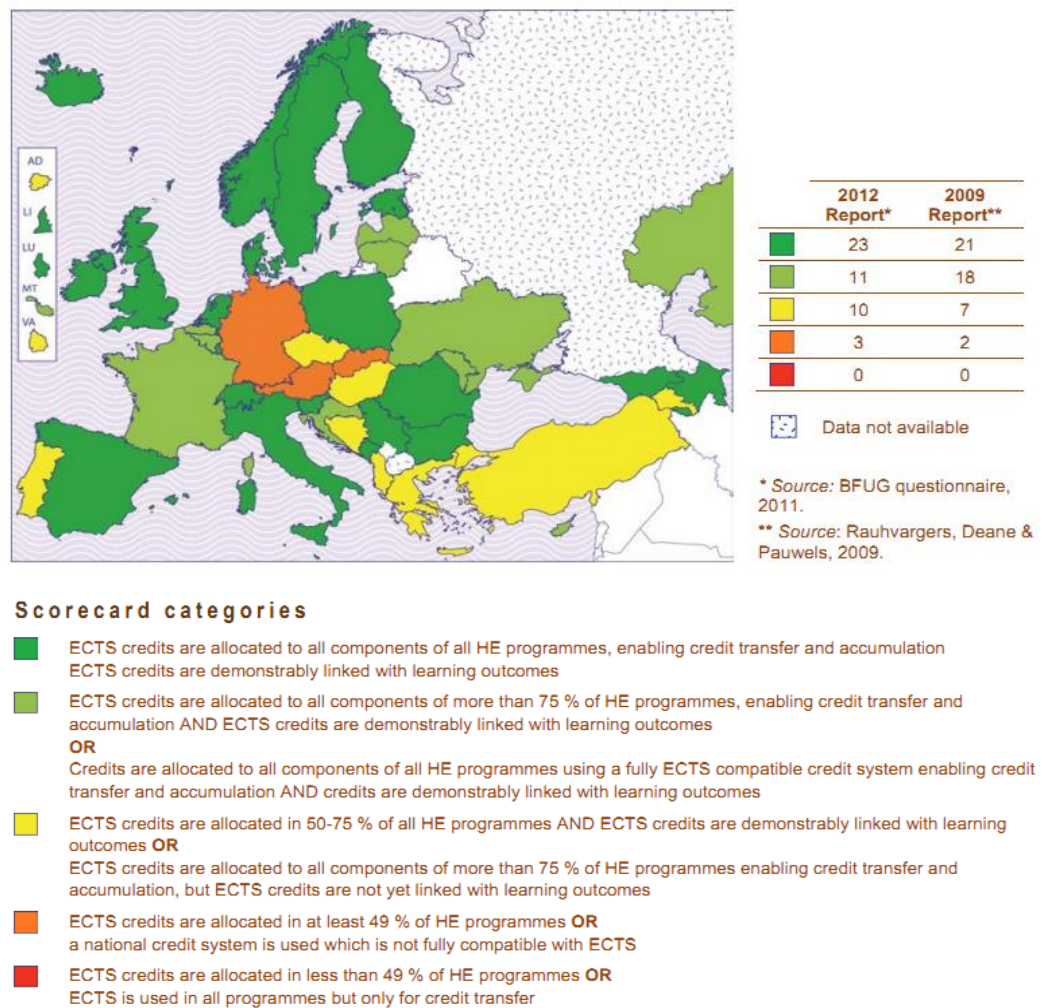


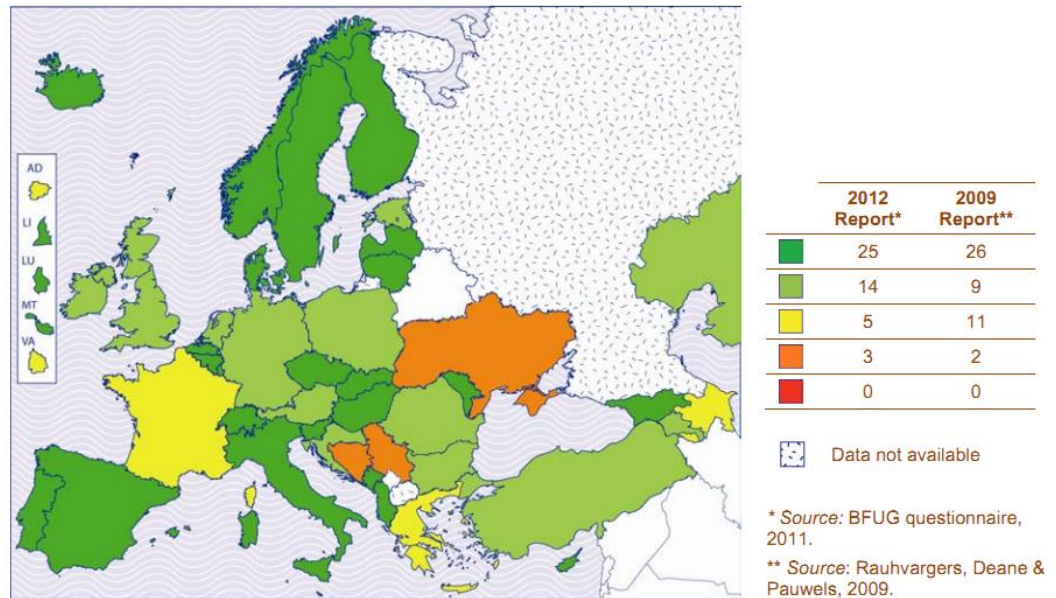
FIGURE 7. Scorecard indicator: Stage of implementation of ECTS system, 2010/11 (EACEA P9 Eurydice 2012, 47).

Figure 7 demonstrates the implementation levels of the ECTS over the members of Bologna Process with comparable information in 2009 and 2012. As shown in Figure 7, the ECTS existed in all of the participants. Significantly, there were 34 countries applied the ECTS properly as they

had more than 75% of their higher education programs applied the ECTS, and their credit transfer and accumulation systems were connected with learning outcomes. However, ten other countries in the yellow area still might not have the ECTS credits linked with the learning outcomes. In Austria, Germany, and Slovakia, the national credit system was assessed as not fully compatible with the ECTS since the rate was almost 50%. In 2012, it was reported that no countries calculated the ECTS credits based on the contact hours only, and 23 countries had the ECTS allocation based on both student workload and learning outcomes. (EACEA P9 Eurydice 2012, 49.)

The third tool of the Bologna Process - the Diploma Supplement was a European Union document, written in the national languages and English, which was to be attached to the original national diploma. The document, which contained description of the nature, level, context, content, and status of the higher education studies of a certain person, was widely recognized abroad. The transparency of education was improved thanks to the Diploma Supplement. (EACEA P9 Eurydice 2012, 54.)





#### Scorecard categories

- Every graduate receives a Diploma Supplement in the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format and in a widely spoken European language
  - automatically
  - free of charge
- Every graduate who requests it receives a Diploma Supplement in the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format and in a widely spoken European language
  - free of charge
- A Diploma Supplement in the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format and in a widely spoken European language is issued to some graduates OR in some programmes free of charge
- A Diploma Supplement in the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format and in a widely spoken European language is issued to some graduates OR in some programmes for a fee
- Systematic issuing of Diploma Supplement in the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format and in a widely spoken European language has not yet started

Note: Indicator measures the implementation of the Diploma Supplement against four criteria:

- 1) Diploma Supplement should be issued to every graduate
- 2) Diploma Supplement should be issued automatically,
- 3) Diploma Supplement should be issued in a widely spoken European language;
- 4) Diploma Supplement should be issued free of charge.

FIGURE 8. Scorecard indicator: Stage of implementation of the Diploma Supplement, 2010/11 (EACEA P9 Eurydice 2012, 53).

As can be observed in Figure 8, the Diploma Supplement was automatically issued and free of charge in 25 countries, while it could only be provided on request in the other 22 countries. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Turkey, and Ukraine, graduates would be charged a fee between 10 EUR to 100 EUR for issuing the Diploma Supplement. Yet

the effectiveness of the Diploma Supplement to the extent of employment was not high. Surveys in Slovenia and Sweden proved that less than 10% of employers were interested or aware of the document. This might suggest a lack of transparency of the Bologna Process; thus, actions to improve its recognition should be taken on the national level. Furthermore, in some countries, the Diploma Supplements did not provide all the required criteria; for example, description of education system of the country, quality assurance status of the institute, entrance qualification to the completed program, and learning outcomes of the student were often unavailable. Missing information was probably caused by the higher education institutes because the Diploma Supplements were not filled in accordance to the guidance provided by the Intergovernmental Committee of the Lisbon Recognition Convention. (EACEA P9 Eurydice 2012, 54.)

### 3.2.2 Internationalization of higher education and the Bologna Process in Finland

To begin with, a brief introduction to Finnish higher education system should be mentioned. Figure 9 displays the education system of Finland. The system consists of two sectors, i.e. universities and polytechnics / university of applied sciences (UAS). In 2015, there are 14 universities and 24 UASs (excluding the Åland Universities of Applied Sciences and the Police Academy) (Study in Finland 2015). The universities offer academic, theoretical education, which is research-oriented. They award Bachelor's degrees (180 ECTS), Master's degrees (120 ECTS), licentiate degrees (120 – 150 ECTS), doctoral degrees (240 ECTS), and postgraduate specialist degrees. On the other hand, the UASs' study programs are more related to work practices, and include hands-on education. The UASs only award Bachelor's degrees (210 – 240 ECTS) and Master's degrees (60 – 90 ECTS). Both sectors have study programs instructed in Finnish, Swedish, and English. Moreover, in Finland there are over 300 programs that use English as the language of instruction; thus, Finland is considered as one of the top providers of higher education in English. Most of

Bachelor's degrees in English are offered by UASs, while a majority of Master's degrees instructed in English is found in universities. (Garam and Korkala 2013, 7; Niemelä et al. 2012, 30-32.)

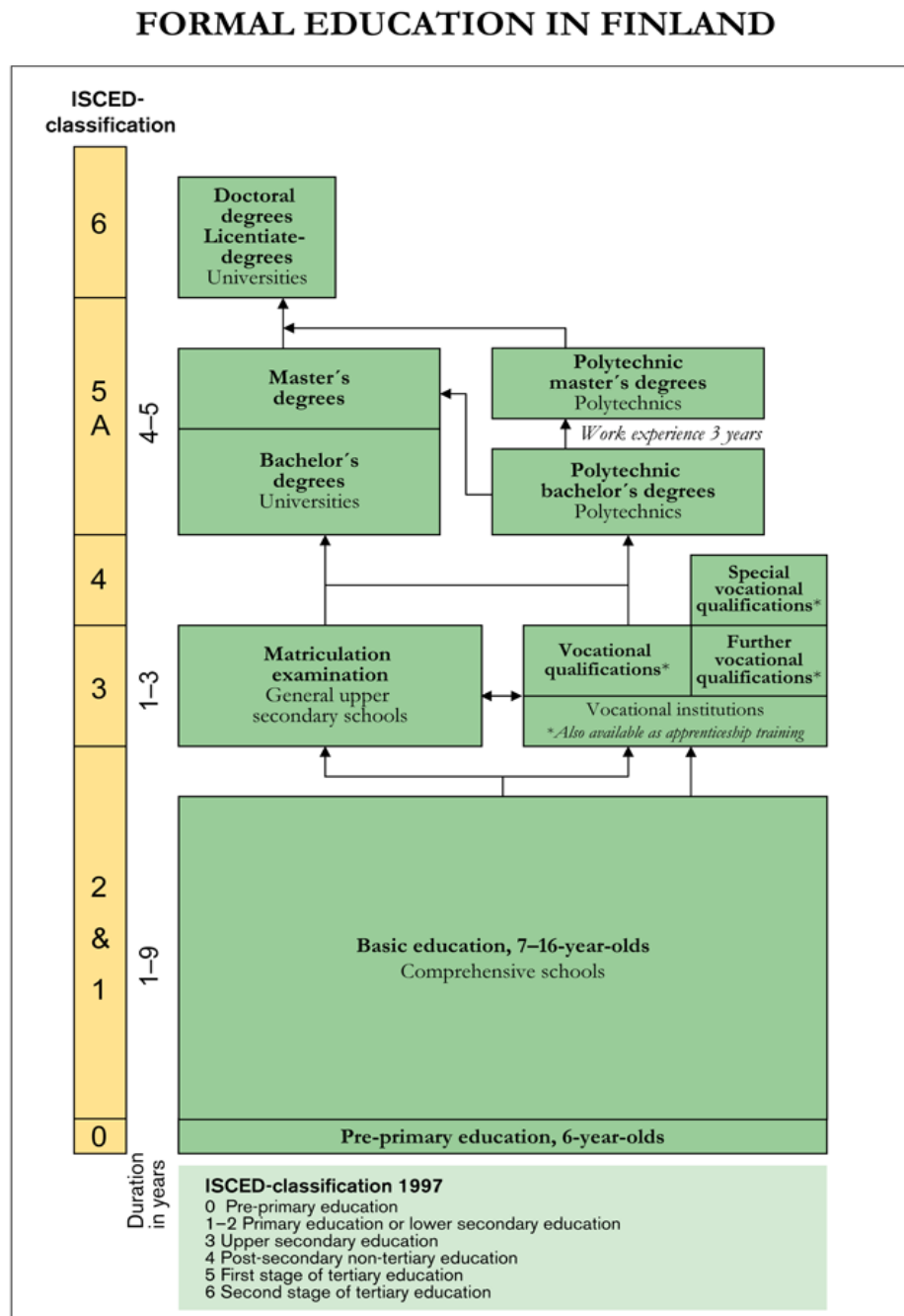


FIGURE 9. The Finnish education system (Niemelä et al. 2012, 29).

In Table 5, national problems of higher education in Finland are addressed as well as the goals of the degree reforms. The problems are said to be long study times, high drop-out rates, unstable labor market, and the need to improve competitiveness. Several reforms and projects have been taken place in postgraduate level in order to solve the problems, and to meet the Bologna Process objectives. For example, in 1994, universities had long study times for Bachelor's degrees and Master's degrees; three and five years respectively. The "Five Years, Two Degrees" projects from 2004 to 2009 helped reform the degree structures, and improve the study time in universities on a national level. Additionally, the "ECTS" project, which was started in 2004, aimed to introduce the ECTS, the Diploma Supplement, and focused to support the UAS in degree reform. (Niemelä et al. 2012, 35-38.)

TABLE 5. The national aims for the degree reform as part of the Bologna Process (Niemelä et al. 2012, 35).

<b>National problems (Ministry of Education 2002)</b>	<b>Proposed measures (Ministry of Education 2001 and 2002)</b>	<b>The aims of the degree reform (Government Proposal 10/2004)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended study times and high dropout rate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption of personal study plans</li> <li>• Monitoring of study progress</li> <li>• ECTS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shorter study times</li> <li>• Lower dropout rates</li> <li>• More efficient filling of study places</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unnecessarily extensive scope of degrees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Degree reform</li> <li>• Strengthening the status of the Bachelor's degree</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updating of degree content</li> <li>• Improving international comparability of degrees</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low level of mobility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two-cycle degree structure</li> <li>• ECTS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased mobility</li> <li>• Easier recruitment of international students</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changing needs of the labor markets and responding to them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased co-operation with employers in planning</li> <li>• Improving the labor-market relevance of the Bachelor's degree</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Producing new competencies for the needs of employers</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern for innovation and competitiveness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Master's degree programs</li> <li>• Developing researcher training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening universities' competitiveness</li> </ul>

Since the 1980s, internationalization of education has been emphasized by Finnish policy makers (Välimaa et al. 2013, 13); hence, increasing student mobility and international co-operation are said to be one of the main objectives that the reforms have to achieve. There are two types of mobility in terms of higher education, namely, domestic mobility and international mobility. Specifically, domestic mobility, in case of Finland, means the movement of students from Bachelor level to Master level and/or to Doctoral level, or the movement of students within or between the two higher education sectors (university and UAS). (Niemelä et al.

2012, 87.) On the other hand, Figure 10 shows different groups of international student mobility. The international mobility includes the mobility periods of student in vocational education and training, mobility periods of incoming and outgoing post-secondary students (via exchange programs or practical trainings). The degree studies abroad consist of Finnish students following higher education abroad and foreign students in Finnish higher education. (Garam and Korkala 2013, 2.) Due to the topic of the thesis, only the international mobility is covered, and only the mobility periods of higher education student and the degree studies abroad groups are focused.

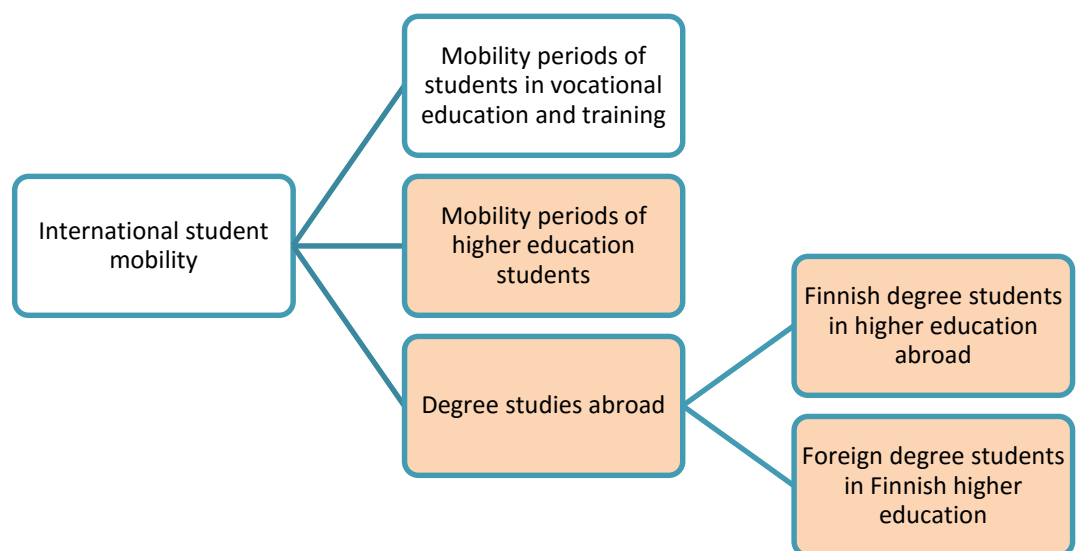


FIGURE 10. International student mobility in groups (Garam and Korkala 2013, 3).

In general, the number of incoming and outgoing students of Finland has been increasing since 2003 thanks to the Bologna Process. A research from the Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council (2012) showed that a majority of Finnish higher education institutes (HEIs) agreed that the Bologna Process had brought Finnish students more chances to join

exchange programs and practical training abroad (Niemi et al. 2012, 96). Statistics (Garam and Korkala 2013, 5) proved that the number of these students had increased slowly by 2,000 students from 2003 to 2012. However, one-third of HEIs stated the reverse, i.e. the degree reform had failed to boost the number of students going exchange. The reasons were that the Bologna two-cycle degree system (Bachelor – Master) and the lack of financial aid might restrict the students from participating exchange programs abroad. (Niemi et al. 2012, 96.)

TABLE 6. Numbers and shares of outgoing and incoming students of Finland in 2012 (Garam and Korkala 2013, 4-5).

		Number of students	Share of the total students
<b>Outgoing</b>	Exchange students	10,014	3.3%
	Degree students	5,874	1.9%
<b>Incoming</b>	Exchange students	9,655	3.1%
	Degree students	19,135	6.2%

Table 6 indicates the number of outgoing and incoming post-secondary students of Finland in 2012 under categories of exchange students and degree students. Regarding the mobility of students who pursued a whole degree abroad, almost all of Finnish HEIs stated that the Bologna Process was the main factor to improve the situation (Niemi et al. 2012, 98). In particular, the ECTS credit and the Diploma Supplement had made Bachelor's Degrees of Finnish HEIs to be easily recognized by foreign HEIs (Niemi et al. 2012, 97). As a result, the number of outgoing Finnish students, which enrolled in a whole degree abroad, increased from around 4,000 students in 2003 to 5,874 students in 2012. Moreover, the number

of outgoing post-secondary students to exchange programs was improved slowly (from nearly 8,000 students in 2003 to 10,014 students in 2012). However, as showed in Table 6, the total outgoing Finnish students that headed abroad accounted for only **5.2%** of the higher education students in 2012. The figure was considered relatively low. Concerning the places of destination, Finnish students tended to choose the Nordic, Asian, and African countries for exchange programs. While most Finnish degree students were found in Europe, particularly in Estonia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom, which was said to be because of the common languages of instruction and the close location of these countries to Finland. (Garam and Korkala 2013, 4-14.)

Furthermore, most Finnish HEIs believed that the degree reforms had influenced the pattern of incoming international students positively. In fact, the number of foreign students that came to Finland for exchange programs had gone up gradually, i.e. it was increased by around 2,700 students during the period of 2003 and 2012. Whereas there was a remarkable surge in the number of international students who pursued whole degrees in Finnish HEIs (from 8,000 students in 2003 to 19,135 students in 2012). Moreover, together Russian and Chinese students made up 16% of the total international degree students of Finland in 2012. Other top countries of origin were Vietnam, Nepal, Nigeria, Estonia, Pakistan, India, Germany, and Bangladesh. (Garam and Korkala 2013, 4-5; Välimaa et al. 2013, 27.) The improvement of incoming student mobility was due to the fact that there were more study programs instructed in English offered by HEIs, the adoption of the ECTS system, and the Bologna degree structure. Other underlying factors were the reputation of Finnish quality education, free tuition fees for international students, and the shortage of education supply in the mentioned countries of origin. As can be seen in Table 6, both incoming degree and non-degree students accounted for nearly 9.3% of the total higher education students in Finland in 2012. (Niemi et al. 2012, 98; Garam and Korkala 2013, 4-15.)



Generally, the Bologna Process and the degree reforms had made positive impacts, particularly on the internationalization of Finnish higher education. All HEIs affirmed that the three-cycle degree system had definitely consolidated the internationalization. To be specific, universities and UASs faced fewer difficulties in the process of selecting foreign students. Furthermore, international cooperation among domestic HEIs and foreign HEIs was enhanced and tightened. Moreover, one-third of both universities and UASs confirmed that they observed developments in their domestic students' international skills; however, about 50% of them agreed on the reverse. (Niemelä et al. 2012, 100.) With only around 5% of the total domestic students headed abroad for studying every year (Garam and Korkala 2013, 5), the question on how the other 95% of Finnish students are able to obtain international dimensions in their education definitely raises concerns. The following chapters analyze the case HEI in order to find out how the level of its IaH is, and how to improve the situation.

## 4 CASE STUDY: LAHTI UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

This chapter provides background information of Lahti UAS such as organization scheme, vision, mission, and international strategies. The statistical data of Lahti UAS international mobility is available as well.

### 4.1 Background information

Lahti University of Applied Sciences, which is also known as Lahti UAS, was founded in 1991. It was a municipal higher education institution that belonged to Lahti City, Finland. In the beginning of 2015, Lahti UAS officially became Lahti UAS Ltd. as part of a reorganization process. The organization is managed by a board that consists of twelve members, and the president of the board is also the CEO of Lahti UAS Limited. Figure 11 displays the organization hierarchy of Lahti UAS. At the moment, there are over 400 teachers and institute staff. Every year, more than 5,000 students are hosted by this university of applied sciences in different faculties, namely Design (which includes Music and Fine Arts), Technology, Social and Health Care, and Business (which includes Tourism and Hospitality). Even though the Faculty of Music and the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality have stopped receiving new students, the Tourism department is going to continue its trainings in the autumn of 2016. Each faculty has its own dean who is responsible for operational and financial management of the faculty, while the directors are the managers of the deans. Moreover, Lahti UAS is a member of the Federation of Universities of Applied Sciences (FUAS) which is the biggest association of universities of applied sciences in Finland. Other members are Laurea University of Applied Sciences and HAMK University of Applied Sciences. (Lahti UAS 2015.)

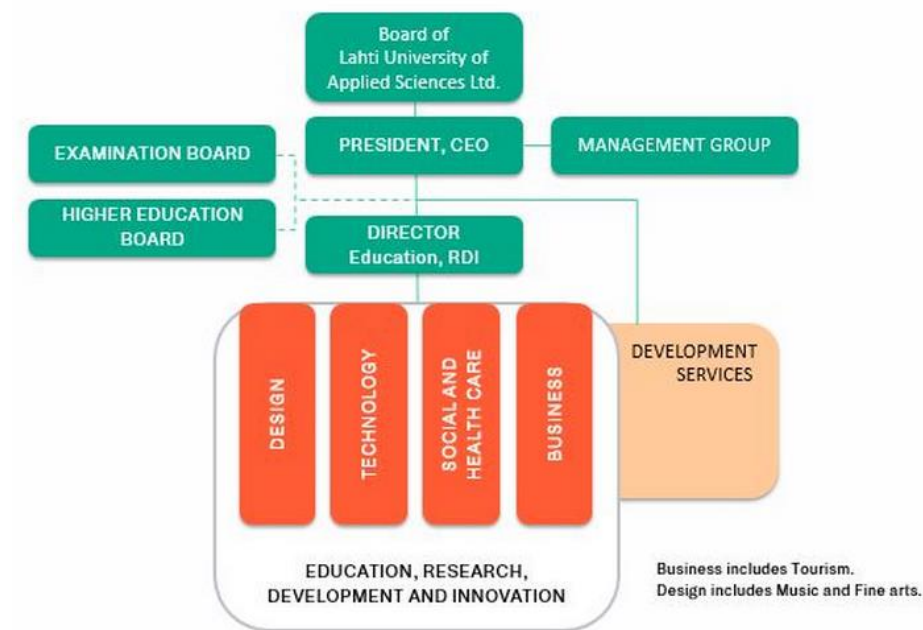


FIGURE 11. The organization hierarchy of Lahti UAS Ltd. (Lahti UAS 2015).

In general, the vision of Lahti UAS Ltd. toward 2020 is to contribute to the development of the Lahti region, and to integrate internationalization into future teaching and learning. The missions are set to strengthen Lahti UAS's international position, networks in education, research, and innovation; to equip students with necessary skills and knowledge which can be beneficial to them in their future career; and to focus on teaching and learning activities as well as the well-being of its students and staff members. (Lahti UAS 2015b, 2.)

#### 4.2 International strategy

Lahti UAS also develops its own international strategy. The rationales of internationalization of Lahti UAS are derived from external and internal environments. First, Lahti UAS has to act in order to respond to the raising demand for internationally educated labor force, and to the intensive competition in internationalization of higher education. Additionally, the

Finnish national policies such as the degree reforms, adjustment in funding schemes, as well as the FUAS's common objectives in internationalization are believed to be the other rationales. Secondly, the main internal incentive is the need to improve the degree programs and activities so that they can meet international standards. (Lahti UAS 2015a, 5.) Furthermore, the national goals regarding internationalization of higher education in Finland are *“promoting global responsibility, increasing quality and attractiveness, building a genuinely international higher education community, and a multicultural society”* (Ministry of Education 2009, 10 – 11). Thus, Lahti UAS's international strategies are set to meet these requirements. Specifically, the institute aims to increase the number of degree programs taught in English in order to enhance its attractiveness to international students, whose presence might possibly encourage local students to go abroad. In addition, Lahti UAS's international strategy states that laH helps all students attain international competence; hence, it is important to improve education with quality international contents, as well as foster multicultural learning environment in all study programs. (Lahti UAS 2015a, 3 – 12.)

#### 4.3 Students and international mobility

Figure 12 shows the number of Lahti UAS students in different faculties in 2014. In this year, there were 5,034 students at Lahti UAS in total. Specifically, the Faculty of Technology had most of the students of Lahti UAS (1,268 students). The number of students of Faculty of Social and Healthcare came at second place with 1,246 students. The Faculty of Business hosted 1,188 students. The rest of the students belonged to Culture (which includes Music, Drama, Design, and Fine Arts students), Natural Science, and Tourism. (Vipunen 2015.)

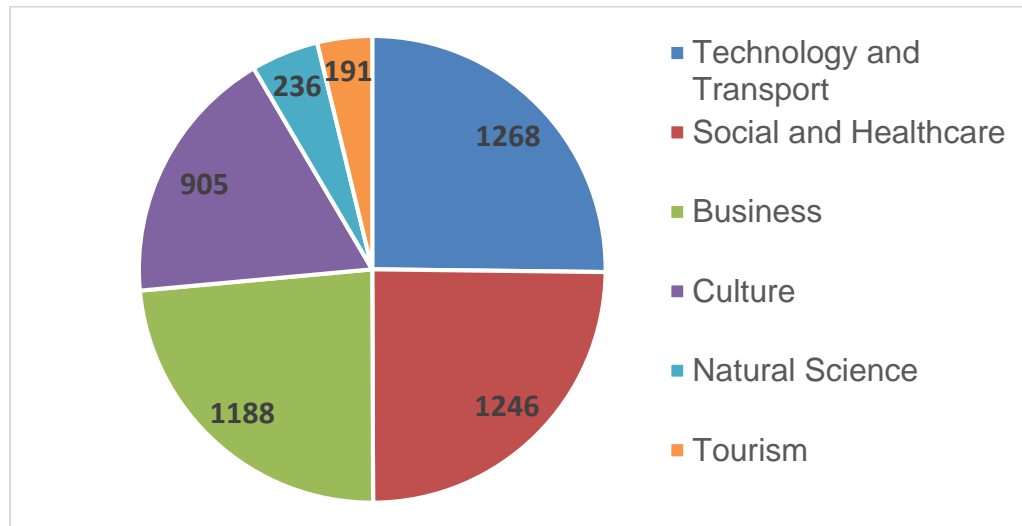


FIGURE 12. Lahti UAS student distribution by faculty in 2014 (Vipunen 2015).

Moreover, Lahti UAS has 24 Bachelor's Degree Programs, three of which use English as the main instruction language. Lahti UAS also offers eight Master's Degree Programs, four of which are taught in English. Lahti UAS receives over 100 new international degree students study every year. The total number of international degree students present at Lahti UAS has increased from 2005 to 2015 as illustrated in Figure 13. During this ten-year period, the number tripled (from 139 students in 2005 to 387 students in 2015). In 2015, the Faculty of Business has the most international degree students than any other faculty (241 students). Faculty of Social and Healthcare ranks at second place with 100 students, and it is followed by the Faculty of Technology with 31 students. Faculty of Tourism and Faculty of Music and Drama have three and one international students respectively. (Vipunen 2015; Lahti UAS 2015.)

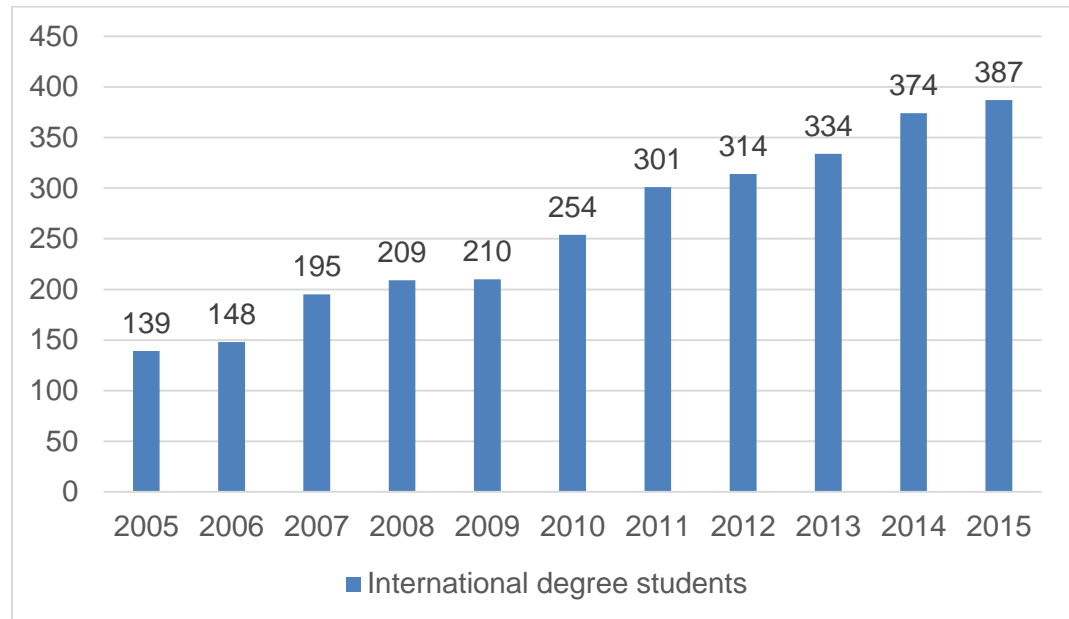


FIGURE 13. The total number of international degree students of Lahti UAS 2005 – 2015 (Vipunen 2015; Lahti UAS 2015).

Concerning international student mobility of Lahti UAS, Figure 14 presents the number of incoming and outgoing students from 2010 to 2014 (see Appendices 2 - 3 for more information). The number of incoming students consists of the international students coming to Lahti UAS for both short term and long-term (over 3 months) exchange periods and internships. Likewise, the number of outgoing students is the sum of home students that went abroad for both short term and long-term exchange studies and internships. The data shows that the number of outgoing students was always higher than that of incoming ones. In 2014, there were 113 outgoing students less than in 2013, while the incoming students increased significantly by 304 students, which might indicate that the new international strategy of Lahti UAS has been successful in receiving more foreign students. (Vipunen 2015.)

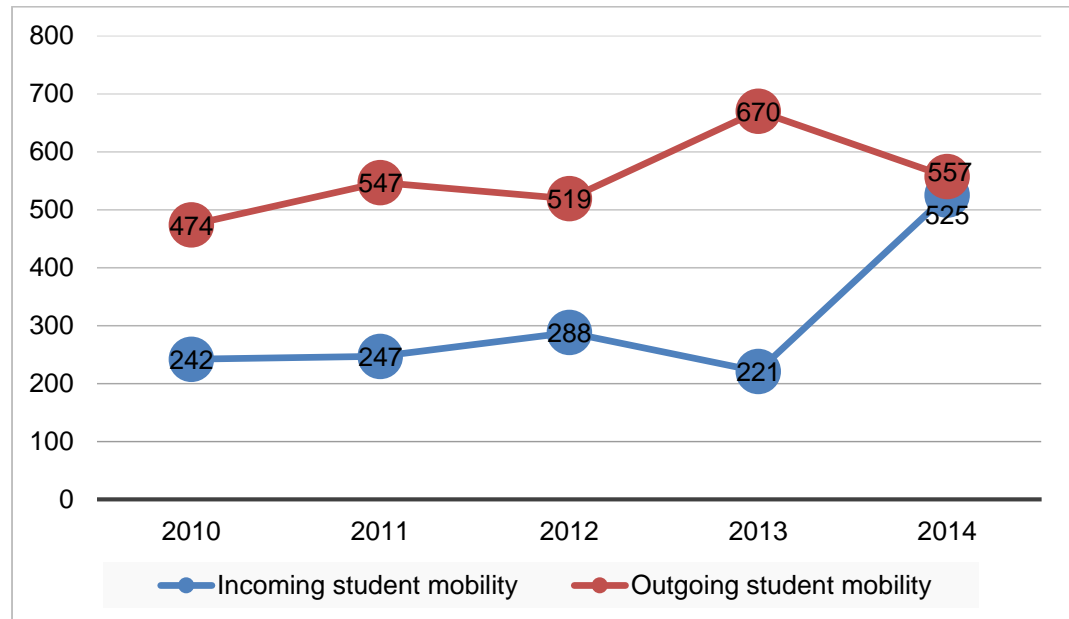


FIGURE 14. International student mobility of Lahti UAS from 2010 to 2014 (Vipunen 2015).

However, the rate of international mobility of home students was not high, specifically, from 9 – 13% of Lahti UAS students head abroad every year (the rate is calculated by using the number of outgoing students divided by the total number of students in the same year) (Lahti UAS 2015). This means a majority of Lahti UAS students might rely mostly on the institute's education and activities in order to achieve GII competencies.

## 5 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH AND FINDINGS

The aim of this empirical research is to answer the question “How do students think of the internationalized curriculum and international extra-curricular activities at Lahti UAS?” This chapter is dedicated to explaining the data collection methods and data analysis. The research findings are utilized to answer the above question. Since IaH involves international extra-curricular activities and internationalized curriculum, it is best to conduct empirical research for these two aspects separately. The research plan is described in Table 7.

TABLE 7. Research plan

<b>IaH aspects</b>	<b>Extra-curricular activities</b>	<b>Internationalized curriculum</b>
<b>Research method</b>	Quantitative method	Qualitative method
<b>Research technique</b>	Online survey questionnaire	Semi-structured interview

Particularly, survey questionnaire was used to analyze the international extra-curricular activity aspect because this research method helped discover the general level of students’ engagement in international extra-curricular activities, and create a picture of the students’ preferences on this matter. Meanwhile, the author employed semi-structure interview for the second aspect of IaH, namely, the internationalized curriculum of Lahti UAS. The interview method collected data from a small number of participants, but it brought an opportunity to gain insightful opinions of students about the internationalized curriculum of Lahti UAS.



## 5.1 International extra-curricular activities

International extra-curricular activities which is one of the two aspects of IaH at Lahti UAS is analyzed in this part. Based on the research plan (Table 7), the research technique employed was survey questionnaire to address the problems of international extra-curricular activities, as well as students' expectations for these activities at Lahti UAS. The sub-chapter explains how the questionnaire was made, distributed, and analyzed. The survey's results are presented in the latter section.

### 5.1.1 Questionnaire design and data analysis

An online questionnaire, which consisted of eight forced-choice questions and three open-ended questions, was created. The question types were how, what, why, where, which, and yes/no questions, and the language used in the survey was English (see Appendix 6). The questionnaire consisted of two parts, namely, background information of student (questions 1 – 3), and international extra-curricular activity related questions (questions 4 – 11). Some of the forced-choice questions allowed respondents to choose as many answers as they wanted. The questionnaire was designed so that the author could receive also qualitative data in order to gain insight of students' opinions about international activities at Lahti UAS. Since the survey was made to serve the **Multicultural Niemi Campus Project** whose aim was to promote the level of student involvements in activities at Niemi Campus (one of the Lahti UAS campuses), the survey respondents were asked for their opinions about the idea of having an international student union at Lahti UAS. Additionally, the respondents were encouraged to express their suggestions how to make the Niemi campus more international and multicultural. Since the international extra-curricular activities includes student unions, student clubs, on-campus events that involve both domestic and international students (Knight 2008, 23, see Table 3 on page 19), the author believes that the survey was suitable to provide primary data to answer the question of extra-curricular events of IaH at Lahti UAS.

Moreover, the target population of the survey was 4,035 Lahti UAS students of Bachelor's Degree Program in all six faculties. The Bachelor's degree students were selected because they included both Finnish and international students, and these students had been to campuses for lectures and activities. The goal of IaH is to help **all** students (both mobile and non-mobile students) achieve international and intercultural dimensions (De Wit et al. 2015, 49); therefore, the survey's target population is suitable to be used in this research.

Furthermore, the distribution of the survey was helped by the Student Office of the Faculty of Business in spring 2014. The Student Office first published the survey on Reppu (the information and e-learning website of Lahti UAS), then the students who subscribed to Reppu received emails containing the invitation to join the survey. In other words, the survey distribution was done indirectly via the Student Office; as a result, it was difficult to identify the exact number of students who received the survey inquiries. Additionally, the online inquiry using Google Form format was opened in one-week time.

Regarding data analysis, all of the questions in the survey needed to be coded because there was only categorical data. Coding data made the data analysis procedure easier and less time-consuming because it allowed the possibility in employing electronic statistical software, such as Microsoft Excel™ and IBM SPSS Statistics™. Thus, the author developed her own coding scheme for both forced-choice questions and open-ended questions. Concerning the data of open-ended questions, the answers to these questions were classified into different categories. Each group was coded so that it would be easy to sort the answers into these groups. Those responses that had similar content or meaning were put under the same category. The results are presented in tables where the responses with high frequencies are highlighted in order to make it easier for the readers to follow. All of the open-ended questions received unqualified answers from some respondents which was treated as missing data. This affected the total number of answer in those questions. Additionally,

observing frequencies of variables was the main technique in data analysis, and statistical data was illustrated in various chart types.

In total, 119 respondents completed the questionnaire. The survey's response rate was lower than expected due to several hindrances, such as the indirect distribution of the survey, short open time of the survey, and lack of survey follow-up (due to short open time). Also, the fact that the survey was only available in English might cause an amount of Finnish-speaking students to easily ignore the questionnaire inquiries due to the language barrier. Therefore, the author conducted a second research which was the semi-structured interviews in order to support the relevance of the empirical results. The survey data was then considered as qualified to answer the research problem of this thesis.

#### 5.1.2 Results of survey questionnaire

##### **Respondents' background information**

In total, 119 respondents took part in the survey, three of whom were left out of the analysis because they were not in the target population. Hence, there were 116 qualified respondents of the survey. Sixty-five percent of them were from Finland, followed by Vietnam (24%). The "other" categories included America, Iran, Kazakhstan, Italy, Czech, Latvia, Bangladesh, and Germany with one student from each of these countries replied to the questionnaire. Figure 15 displays the respondents by nationality.

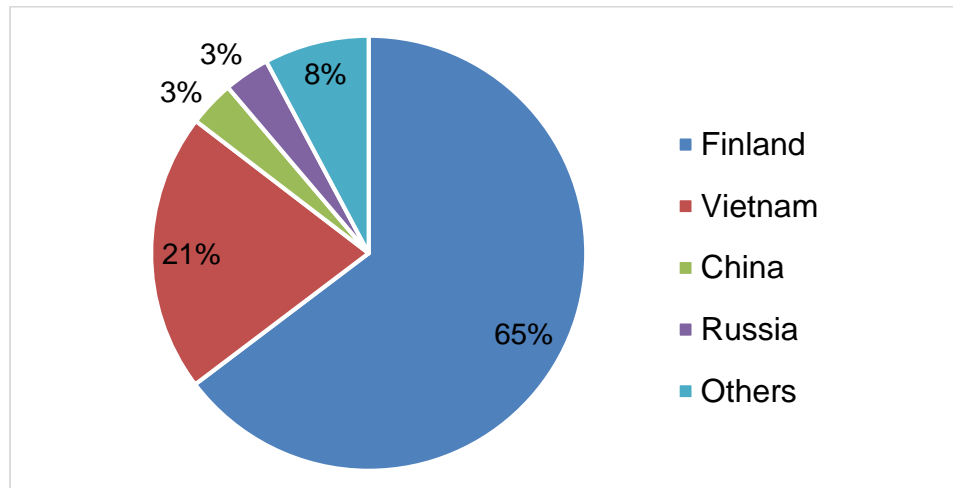


FIGURE 15. Respondents by nationality.

Even though the inquiries were sent to all six faculties of Lahti UAS, the distribution of the respondents was not equal. As seen in Figure 16, answers were received more from the Faculty of Business, Faculty of Technology, and Faculty of Social and Healthcare, compared to the other three faculties. The first reason might possibly be that the questionnaire was available only in English, and there were more international students in the above-mentioned faculties.

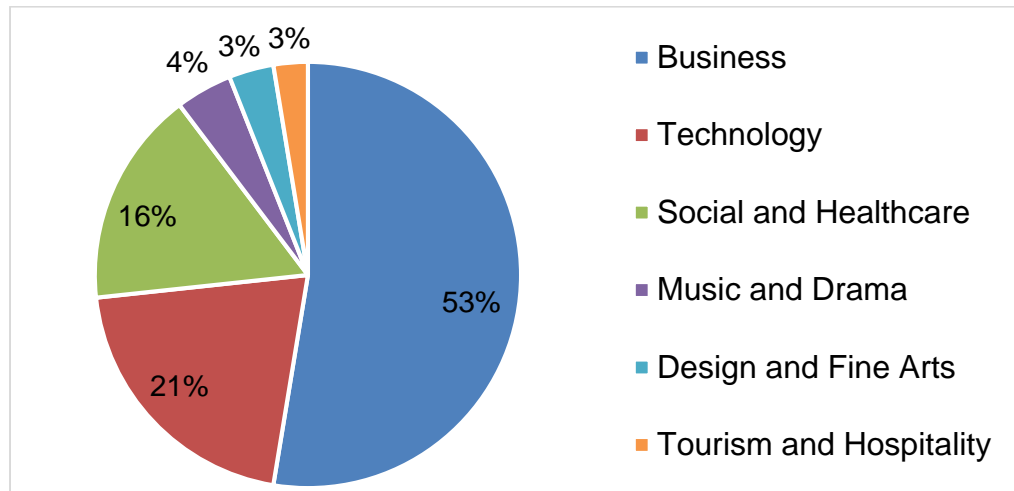


FIGURE 16. The unequal distribution of respondents of all six faculties of Lahti UAS.

Students who started to study at Lahti UAS in 2011, 2012, and 2013 actively took part in the research. Meanwhile, there were only 14% of the total respondents begun their study programs in 2010 and before that (see Appendix 4). This is due to the fact that most of the students from those groups had graduated. In addition, there was only 2% of participants who belonged to the student group of 2014 because they might have never been to the Niemi Campus due the fact that they mostly had classes and education activities in other campuses during the first year.

### **Internationalization in social network of students**

The author made a cross tabulation which shows the frequencies of respondents' answers to if they would like to be connected with students of different nationalities, and if they find it hard to get in touch with those students. As presented in Table 8, a majority of respondents (85%) stated that they would like to connect with students of different nationalities. However, half of the students admitted that they faced difficulties in creating social networks with students from other cultures. When it was narrowed down to each faculty, the result applied, i.e. half of the students in each faculty found it hard to get in touch with students from other countries (see Appendix 5).

TABLE 8. Cross tabulation of respondents by two questions: “Do you want to connect with students of different nationalities?” and “Do you find it hard to connect with students of different nationalities?”

Count

		Hard to connect		Total
		Yes	No	
Willing to connect with students of different nationalities	Yes	51	48	99
	No	7	10	17
Total		58	58	116

Furthermore, those students were asked for reasons why it was hard for them. The respondents were able to explain the reasons freely in an open-ended question. The reasons are displayed in Table 9. The highlighted groups in Table 9 received most of the answers. Many respondents stated that there were not enough opportunities for them to meet international students. Specifically, 41% of the total responses fell into the two reasons, i.e. “no common courses/projects” and “no common casual and social activities.” The respondents claimed they did not have any academic courses or project works with students of different nationalities. There were some students stated that they hardly ever saw any international students at their campuses, and most of these responses came from Faculty of Technology, although this faculty hosted the third most of international degree students every year. Moreover, 7% of the total respondents said that the international students and the local students had their own communities and events, and there was no mutual community where students from these groups could get to know each other.

TABLE 9. The reasons why it is hard to connect with students of different nationalities.

Categories	Code	Number of answers	Percent
No common courses/projects	1	13	22%
No common casual and social activities	2	11	19%
No common communities	3	4	7%
No international students in campus	4	8	14%
Unwillingness to participate in activities/events	5	2	3%
Location of activities/events	6	1	2%
Living location	7	2	3%
Language barrier	8	4	7%
Cultural barrier	9	3	5%
Shy or reserved personality	10	7	12%
No common interests	11	2	3%
Returning student from exchange loses network	12	1	2%
<b>Total</b>		<b>58</b>	<b>100%</b>

In addition, the fourth most mentioned reason was that students' shyness and reserved personality hindered communication among them. One international student explained that Finnish people were "*reserved and separate*" which left this respondent with difficulties in making connection with the domestic students. Cultural differences and language problems were also on the list of the obstacles. Besides, 3% of respondents admitted that they were not willing to participate in events or activities where they could meet new friends at Lahti UAS. Another pointed out that the locations of the events or activities were not suitable to him/her. Moreover, other reasons that were mentioned as obstacles were "no common interests" and "living location." In particular, the lack of common interests among students made it hard to start a conversation; as well as some said that there were no international students in their dormitories. The last reason, which was revealed from the survey, was that it was hard

for returning students from exchange period to build connection with other students because they might have lost their social network at Lahti UAS after the exchange program.

### **Students' preferences regarding extra-curricular activities**

The respondents were asked how they usually meet new friends. In this question, there were options of four different means via which they might make connections with new people. The students might choose as many options as they wanted. Table 10 shows a summary of the answers, and highlights the most chosen options. A majority of them selected “social parties.” “Academic and professional events”, such as career fair, competitions, was favored second most with 23.1% of the total participants, and it was followed by the “outside campus activities” (20.7% of the total participants). An example of “outside campus activities” was Multi-Culti organization which frequently created social events to gather international immigrants and students in Lahti Region. Additionally, “online social network” such as Facebook, Twitter was selected by 13% of the total students as a mean to make new connections. Besides, the respondents added other places where they usually met new friends, such as Lahti UAS campuses, group works in academic courses, workplace, and sport classes organized by the student union of Lahti UAS - LAMKO.



TABLE 10. “How do you usually meet new friends?”

		Responses	
		N	Percent
How do you usually meet new friends?	Social parties	77	37.0%
	Mainly through online social networks	27	13.0%
	Academic and professional events	48	23.1%
	Outside campus activities	43	20.7%
	Others	13	6.2%
Total		208	100.0%

Furthermore, in order to provide more information on what students would prefer, the respondents were requested to choose what events or activities they would like to participate in to meet new people. There were seven events with different themes as options from which respondents could choose, namely, “travelling trips”, “International Food Festival”, “DuuniExpo” (career fair), “Winter Wonderland” (stand-up comedy show), “Happy Valentine” (social party), “Lahti Service Jam” (business theme), and “lectures at school”. Table 11 summarizes the respondents’ choices and highlights the most chosen options.

TABLE 11. “Which event/activity would you like to participate in to meet new people?”

		Responses	
		N	Percent
Which event/activity would you like to participate in to meet new people?	Travelling trips	72	24.9%
	International Food Festival	55	19.0%
	DuuniExpo	22	7.6%
	Winter Wonderland	24	8.3%
	Happy Valentine	40	13.8%
	Lectures at school	50	17.3%
	Lahti Service Jam	18	6.2%
	Others	8	2.8%
Total		289	100.0%

Regarding extra-curricular activities, “travelling trips” and “International Food Festival” had most of the votes (together they made up 43.9% of the total responses). The third most chosen activity where students would like to meet new people was “lectures at school” (17.3% of the total respondents). Social party such as the “Happy Valentine” appeared in 13.8% of the total cases. Besides the suggested options given in the survey, respondents could suggest what other events or activities in which they would like to take part. The suggestions were project work, curricular courses that contains domestic and foreign students, and the International Coffee Break.

### **Students’ expectations for international student union**

The author wished to survey students’ opinions in establishing an association for international students. The association would be called international student union. The survey also revealed what students expect from this union. A cross tabulation was created to show the relationship between the two variables, i.e. “Do you wish to have an

international student union at Lahti UAS?” and respondents’ nationalities. As can be seen in Table 12, over 55% of the total respondents wished to have a union for international students, and most of these positive answers came from international students. On the other hand, about 35% of the total participants expressed their neutral opinion on this matter. Finnish students appeared to choose this option more than other alternatives. Only 9.5% of the total respondents refused to have this union.

TABLE 12. Cross tabulation of “Do you wish to have an international student union at Lahti UAS?” by nationalities of respondents.

		Wish to have Int. Student Union			Total
		Yes	No	I do not care	
Nationality	Finland	29	10	36	75
	Vietnam	20	1	3	24
	China	4	0	0	4
	Russia	4	0	0	4
	Others	7	0	2	9
	Total	64	11	41	116

The students were also asked to express their expectations for the international student union if there would be such. The author summed up the answers of respondents for this question in Table 13. Responses were categorized into ten different groups. The highlighted categories were the issues that students expected the most. First, 46% of respondents wished that the union would organizing events or activities in order to connect students. The mentioned activities were as the following: welcoming event for non-degree students, professional and learning benefiting events (such as competitions, student camps), joint events or activities with other organizations, cultural themed events, hobby clubs (such as sport, singing, art), and social events for both Finnish and international students. Secondly, the respondents expected that the union would promote

interaction and connection among Finnish and international students (including both international degree students and non-degree degree students).

TABLE 13. Students' expectations for international student union.

Categories	Code	Number of answers	Percent
Creating events/activities	1	28	46%
Integrating Finnish and international students	2	12	20%
Creating international networks	3	1	2%
Listening to what both Finnish and international students want	4	3	5%
Bringing more benefits to students	5	1	2%
Recruiting international students	6	1	2%
Providing help for international students	7	6	10%
Information and news in English and other languages	8	3	5%
Promoting internationalization	9	4	7%
Creating exchange opportunities	10	2	3%
<b>Total</b>		<b>61</b>	<b>100%</b>

Thirdly, the international student union must be able to provide help for foreign students when needed. Particularly, the respondents would like get help on the following matters: *“everyday issues, finding friends, tips on how to spend time, hobbies, adaptation to Lahti City, support for new comers, and finding a job or internship.”* On the students' perspectives, the international student union ought to provide useful services to international students, as well as looking after them. Moreover, 7% of respondents expected that the union would be able to foster internationalization and multiculturalism at Lahti UAS. Furthermore, 5% of the total respondents stressed that the voice of international students should be heard by the

union. At the same time, the union must meet the needs of Finnish students on the matter of internationalization. Some other found the availability of information and news of the union in English and other languages more important to them. Other expectations that were on the list included “*creating international networks*,” “*bringing more benefits to students*,” “*creating exchange opportunities*” (such activities where students are able to exchange, for example, languages or cultures), and “*recruiting international students*.”

### **Students’ suggestions on multicultural campus**

The survey gave the respondents an opportunity to suggest what might improve the multiculturalism at Lahti UAS campus in their opinions. Since the survey was done for a project regarding Niemi Campus, the respondents were asked to give their suggestions particularly for the Niemi Campus. Table 14 presents the students’ suggestions. First, most of the students (49%) would like to have more events and activities at the Niemi Campus. The following activities were favored: movie night, cooking event, multicultural event, social event, workshop, competition (in sport, cooking, for instance), travelling trips, the International Coffee Break, camping, international dinner, and hobby clubs. The events should be suitable for all students of Lahti UAS and hosted at Niemi Campus, so that it would improve the engagement level of the domestic and international students with the campus. Three percent of the total respondents stressed that the information of the events and activities at Lahti UAS should be well advertised to reach all students. In addition, integration of native students and international students was suggested to contribute to the multiculturalism of Niemi Campus.

TABLE 14. Students' suggestions on making Niemi Campus multicultural.

Categories	Code	Number of answers	Percent
Creating events, activities, and clubs	1	50	49%
Creating student union or society	2	3	3%
Marketing events or activities	3	3	3%
Integrating Finnish students and international students	4	4	4%
Courses/projects involving both Finnish and international students	5	18	18%
Cultural themed courses	6	4	4%
More language courses	7	2	2%
Promoting English usage	8	5	5%
Common spaces at campus for socializing	9	4	4%
Cafeteria offers food of other cultures and more choices	10	2	2%
Information in Finnish and English	11	1	1%
Creating friendly and open environment	12	1	1%
Bulletin boards for happenings and news of different regions	13	1	1%
All faculties in one place and connection among faculties	14	3	3%
Receiving more international students	15	1	1%
<b>Total</b>		<b>102</b>	<b>100%</b>

The second highest number of votes (18%) belonged to “courses or projects involving both Finnish and international students.” Students wished to have more courses or project works which were designed to involve both Finnish and international students. Regarding the same matter, respondents requested to have more cultural focused courses, language courses, as well as academic courses taught in English for all students. Some pointed out the importance of English as a common language at university campus. Furthermore, other suggestions concerning the facilities, which might help improve the multiculturalism of Niemi Campus, were as the following:

- common space at campus for students to spend time together,
- more choices on food of other cultures offered at the campus cafeteria,
- information and news in Finnish and English languages,
- bulletin boards for happenings and news of different regions of the world,
- and friendly and open environment at campus.

In addition, three students believed that the Niemi Campus would become multicultural when all of the faculties of Lahti UAS were unified in a single campus area; as well as the connections among faculties were strengthened. Increasing the number of international students of Lahti UAS was also mentioned as an important factor in making the campus more cultural diverse.

## 5.2 Internationalized curriculum

The second aspect of laH which is Internationalized curriculum is the focus in this part. According to the research plan, semi-structured interview was employed. The design of semi-structured interview, data collection process, and qualitative data analysis are presented in this subchapter.

### 5.2.1 Interview design and data collection process

Since Lahti UAS had only internationalized curriculum in some study programs, it was best to proceed interview with students from these study programs because they had experienced the international designed curriculum. In other words, their opinions were the most relevant for this thesis. This research targeted the students who were in their third or fourth year because they were considered as mature students that had gained a certain amount of experience of Lahti UAS's education and services. Thus, they were able to give objective opinions toward Lahti UAS's laH. Moreover, there were Finnish students who did not follow international study programs, but they had participated in courses where was

international learning environment. The author believed that the opinions from these Finnish students could also benefit the research of this dissertation in terms of evaluating the internationalized curriculum. By interviewing these native students, the empirical research could produce a broader view regarding IaH of Lahti UAS based on different students' perspectives. Therefore, the target group of the interview was Lahti UAS Bachelor's Degree students of English taught study programs and native Bachelor's Degree students who had had experiences in internationalized curriculum or courses.

The interview concentrated on curricular courses which had international and cultural focus or subjects. The attempt is to find out what the target students thought of the current internationalized curriculum at Lahti UAS, and how the internationalized curriculum could benefit them in their opinions. Moreover, the research must reveal students' suggestions of how Lahti UAS could improve international learning environment and experience in the future. Therefore, the questions of the interview were made to meet the above criteria. Specifically, the question set was divided into three parts (see Appendix 7). The first part contained questions related to Lahti UAS and its internationalization in general. The second part emphasized the international curriculum with questions of students' opinions about curricular courses that focused on internationalization and cultural aspects, as well as teaching methods. The last part of the interview aimed to ascertain respondents' suggestions regarding developing internationalized curriculum, and what Lahti UAS could do to enhance the international learning experience. Since the author used semi-structured interview as her research technique, beside the questions prepared beforehand, there were additional questions raised during the interviews in order to gain insight to some specific aspects. The additional questions varied in each interview.

In total, there were ten interviews, nine of which were face-to-face and one-on-one sessions in Lahti. There was only one interview made via Skype. Furthermore, the duration of interviews ranged from 30 minutes to



45 minutes. The interview process was carried out in October 2015. Moreover, Table 15 lists the interviewees' nationalities and their study programs. There were four Finnish students, three Vietnamese students, two Chinese students, and one Kenyan student from Lahti UAS participated in the interview. The interviewees came from two different faculties, namely, Faculty of Business, and Faculty of Social and Healthcare.

TABLE 15. Interviewee' nationality, faculty, study program, and their study language.

	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Faculty</b>	<b>Bachelor's Degree Program</b>	<b>Main language of instruction</b>
Interviewee 1	Vietnamese	Faculty of Business	in International Business	English
Interviewee 2	Finnish	Faculty of Business	in Business Information Technology	Finnish
Interviewee 3	Finnish	Faculty of Social and Healthcare	in Social Services	Finnish
Interviewee 4	Vietnamese	Faculty of Business	in International Business	English
Interviewee 5	Chinese	Faculty of Business	in International Business	English
Interviewee 6	Finnish	Faculty of Business	in Business Information Technology	Finnish
Interviewee 7	Finnish	Faculty of Business	in Business Information Technology	Finnish
Interviewee 8	Chinese	Faculty of Social and Healthcare	in Nursing	English
Interviewee 9	Vietnamese	Faculty of Business	in International Business	English
Interviewee 10	Kenyan	Faculty of Social and Healthcare	in Nursing	English

The interviews were carried out in English and Vietnamese. As the author was from Vietnam, and it was easier for both the interviewer and interviewee to speak in their mother tongue in terms of expressing opinions and ideas; thus, Vietnamese language was used during interviews with Vietnamese students. With students from other nationalities, English was the main language. Furthermore, since the technique was semi-structured interview, the interviews were audio-recorded. The audio-recordings were then transcribed into written data. Those interviews that were done in Vietnamese were transcribed and translated into English written data, because it was easier to compare the data of different interviewees in one homogeneous language. The translation was done by the author herself. Due to the fact that the transcribing process was time-consuming; the audio-recordings had to be transcribe as soon as each interview was done.

#### 5.2.2 Results of semi-structured interview

##### **Lahti UAS and its internationalization**

There were several reasons behind why the interviewed students chose Lahti UAS as their study place. The fact that Lahti City was close to Helsinki – the capital region made “location” the most mentioned reason. Besides, students selected Lahti UAS on recommendations of their family, friends, and educational agencies. Two participants also stated that they wanted to study at Lahti UAS because Lahti UAS offered study programs taught in English. Moreover, both Finnish and international students expected to receive high quality of teaching from Lahti UAS’s education. However, international students had other expectations on the internationalization since they chose to study in internationalized programs. Specifically, they expected that they would be able to improve their English proficiency, to study in international courses taught in English, to meet international students, and to study in international learning environment.

Furthermore, the interviewer proposed a question on whether the students thought Lahti UAS is an international HEI, and what made Lahti UAS international in their opinions. A majority of respondents gave positive answer to this question, and pointed out the fact that the diversity of students' nationalities at Lahti UAS made this HEI international. Additionally, Lahti UAS offered international programs, and organized joint courses with foreign universities which gave students opportunities to study abroad, for instance, the Erasmus exchange program, and several intensive courses at partner universities overseas. Some students including the Finnish said that they felt Lahti UAS was an international HEI because they got to have lectures with students from different countries.

### **Internationalized curriculum**

In Bachelor's degree programs taught in English, there were mandatory courses which had international and cultural focus. However, students of international degree programs had very little choice of elective courses related to cultures and ethnicity. There were different elective language courses at Lahti UAS such as Swedish, German, Russian, French, and Spanish, but the tuition of these language courses were only in Finnish. The foreign students could only study English and/or Finnish language. On the other hand, native students in Finnish taught study programs had less or even none international focus compulsory courses in their curriculum. The Finnish interviewees claimed that the international and cultural aspects were not integrated in their study courses. One Finnish student from Faculty of Business expressed that *"international point of view should be in almost every course"* and *"it is weird that in our marketing courses, we don't get to learn how to make business with foreign people."*

Most of the participants said that they knew about the elective courses regarding cultures and languages, and about how to enroll in them via their teachers. Some explained that they were not able to use the new student service Deski competently, while Reppu and WinhaWille channels were often mixed up. They also had to know the exact courses that they

wanted to look for if they used Reppu or WinhaWille. Thus, the students had to ask their teachers for information of elective courses. Besides being consulted by the teachers, students got informed of elective courses on cultures and languages via curriculum lists, friends' recommendations, or advertisement emails from Lahti UAS.

The interviewees were asked about their expectations of international and cultural focus courses. Typically, the students of Bachelor's Degree in International Business expected to learn about marketing, logistics, and business in different regions of the world. Gaining knowledge of cultures and ethnicity was also mentioned. Moreover, since all of the interviewees had attended classes with students from different nationalities, they were looking forward to meeting foreigners, and improving their English skills. Furthermore, the interviewees were requested to describe the atmosphere and learning environment in those classes where there were both native and international students. The Finnish respondents expressed that it was very different from having classes with only Finnish people, i.e. they felt that the atmosphere in international courses was *"open, nice, and warm"* because their classmates were friendly to them even though they were from different countries. Plus, they believed the learning environment was international as tuition was only in English, and students were able to interact with those of other races. Nevertheless, there was contrary opinions. Specifically, two interviewees said that some courses' atmosphere was quiet because there were just a few students in class, and students stayed in their own friend groups, and were not actively participating. This led to the question on whether the teachers had taken any actions in order to promote international learning environment, and improve the interaction among students. A majority of interviewees affirmed that their teachers did their best in this matter. Particularly, teachers' efforts included the following actions: organizing group discussion, raising questions of each culture's situation regarding the lesson topics, providing information and exercises related to different cultures, telling their own experience in other cultures or countries, dividing the class into multicultural groups, helping international students, and

encouraging students to work with others from different nations. On the contrary, there were opposite opinions on the teachers' effort in providing international and interactive learning environment. Some interviewees pointed out that *"different teachers had different teaching methods;"* thus, there were courses where students did not have chances to interact with their classmates, but rather listening to the lectures, and doing individual homework. Language courses were most mentioned in terms of lacking interactive learning opportunities.

The research revealed how international and cultural focus courses benefited students from their perspectives. Almost all of the interviewees stated that these courses were beneficial to them. Some students addressed that professional courses with integrated international aspect would bring them advantages in the future when they work in a foreign country. According to the interviewees, via cultural related courses, students were able to learn about cultures, ethnicity, and how to communicate with people of different races. Furthermore, students from different faculties perceived the benefits of cultural courses differently. In particular, these courses would be beneficial to students in Faculty of Business when it came to doing business with foreigners as they understood business etiquettes. Whereas students in Faculty of Social and Healthcare learned how to take care of people from different cultures and religions. One student believed that cultural courses helped her avoid culture shock because these classes provided her with basic knowledge, and what to expect from diverse cultural contexts. In addition, cultural related courses could bring motivations as one participant stated: *"I began to get interested in cultures where my friends are from. At least culture courses build in each students an interest in cultures."* Also, an interviewee said that sometimes it was more interesting and fun for him to study something else besides his professional subjects. Moreover, Lahti UAS organized courses where there were representatives of domestic and foreign companies, or teachers from Lahti UAS's partner universities abroad came as guest lecturers. Some students indicated that these international designed courses could be very beneficial to them in terms of

creating network with professional people, as well as learning the professions from a worldwide angle.

It was essential to mention the interaction among local and international students in internationalized curriculum, hence, the author and the participating students discussed the mix of Finnish students and foreign students in classes, and their experiences on the matter. All of the interviewees expressed a very positive opinion, i.e. they believed mixing people of different races in a classroom was a good education method, and it was beneficial to their international learning experience at Lahti UAS. The interviewees were asked about the educational advantages that mixing these two groups of students could bring based on their own experiences. They asserted that studying with people from different countries enabled them to approach the course's subjects via a variety of perspectives. Students were able to widen their knowledge not only by lectures at class but also by learning from their classmates in a multinational environment. Some Finnish interviewees explained that they learned more in a multicultural class compared to a classroom with only Finnish students because in a non-multicultural classroom, the perspectives on a particular subject may be only from the Finnish viewpoint. Moreover, one respondent emphasized that *"it is important to learn to sympathize, and to look in different ways."* In internationalized courses, where there is group work with multinational people, the students were given the opportunities to observe the working styles of people of various cultures, to learn how to cooperate in a multicultural team, and to improve their English skills. Regarding the opinions of international students, it was crucial that a multinational classroom must ensure the presence of the native students, which in this case was the Finnish. One stated that *"if there are no Finnish students, the class will lack something."* According to the international students, they were able of study Finnish culture and language by having lectures with the locals. Besides, a course of mixing native and international students could be a place to meet multinational schoolmates, and to build networks with different nations. However, the participants added that a multicultural learning environment

could only be effective if there was influence from the teachers.

Specifically, some agreed that if the teachers divided the class into multicultural groups, it would motivate the students to be international.

They pointed out that *“it’s good when teacher forms multicultural groups because when you do it yourself, you always work with the people you know already,” “you tend to sit with those who speak the same language with you,”* and *“if we work with people from the same country, we won’t have a chance to open up our mind and know about other countries.”*

Furthermore, one Finnish student recommended that courses involving the native and the international students should not be mandatory to all the Finnish students because some of them might lack English skills, and they might not be interested in working with foreigners.

In addition, although a majority of interviewees stated that they were able to create social relations with their classmates of different nationalities after having lectures together, the other participants confirmed the opposite. They claimed that they were only able to interact with students from different cultures only in classroom. However, the problem was that the interaction at class lasted around 10 – 20 minutes, while the rest of the class time they spent listening to lectures. They also addressed that even though they had group work in multicultural groups, the group members often worked individually as the assignments were split and assigned to each member, so that they could do it by themselves. Therefore, some students wished to have more exercises and bigger projects where the group members could be more committed and dedicated to working as a team. Other reasons why the students were not able to create social networks after having courses together were said to be culture and language barriers.



### Students' suggestions

In general, all of the interviewees recognized the success of Lahti UAS in international education. When being asked how they thought of international learning experience at Lahti UAS, many of them commented positively, such as:

*“Lahti UAS gives me a chance to work with people of different nationalities,”*

*“Lahti UAS provided international learning environment to me,”*

*“studying at Lahti UAS makes me feel that this is not only about Finland and Finnish students, here at Lahti UAS we get more multicultural.”*

The students themselves perceived the importance of internationalization, and expressed that they were willing to learn about it as one explained:

*“Lahti UAS gives us an opportunity to be international, you don't have to be if you don't choose. But it is important to know about internationalization!”* They believed that Lahti UAS had been on the right track in terms of being an international HEI, and it had kept developing.

But there was always room for betterment; thus, the participants were asked for comments on how to improve the international and cultural focus courses.

Regarding the professional courses, they stressed the necessity of integrating international aspects into their profession programs.

Specifically, professional courses should cover the topics on a global scale, not just only about Finland. Most of the students wished to have more courses on cultures and ethnicity. Courses on how to communicate or work with the Russians, the Asians, and the Americans were requested the most. However, some suggested that these cultural related courses should be elective because there might be students who were not interested in this subject. Furthermore, the international students wished to have several language courses (beside Finnish and English languages) to be available in English.

Concerning the teaching methods and the design of international and cultural related courses, most participants expressed that they would like to have multinational classes. One Finnish student said: *“I’m happy that we have courses with the international students!”* He and the other Finnish interviewees were willing to attend courses with international students. Whereas, the international students stressed the importance of the presence of Finnish students in their learning environment. Additionally, the interviewees asserted that the role of teachers was crucial in terms of international learning experience at Lahti UAS. They were satisfied with the courses where the teachers promoted their international learning experience by giving assignments and discussion topics on a global scale. Nevertheless, the interviewees expressed that they would like to have more contact lectures where the teachers could provide their own experience in international or cultural contexts. Employing teaching methods that could provide students with practical knowledge in cultural courses, such as case study or problem solving, was also suggested. Moreover, teachers could have put more effort to encourage the interaction among the students, specifically, in language courses where the interviewees indicated the lack of interaction and activities. In addition, the teachers’ role was not only to teach but also to encourage students as one participant said: *“Teachers should encourage Finnish students to interact more, help them with the language, so they can understand more from international students.”* This was to ensure that no one would be left out in a multinational learning environment. Besides, the participants wished to have more guest lecturers who might be representatives of international organizations or professors from abroad. Lastly, students of Faculty of Social and Healthcare hoped that there would be other elective courses available to them besides Finnish language courses, and there should be guidelines in searching and enrolling to international and cultural related elective courses for them.

The interviewees were asked if there would be any specific topics that they would like Lahti UAS to organize a course on. One student suggested to have a course on *“the hottest topics on global level”* because she believed

that it was important to know what was happening around the world. Specifically, the idea was that the course might not have fixed contents because the hot topics would change overtime. The students could come to this course and share their opinions on the topics. Another interviewee would like to have a cultural course which had casual environment where the teachers assigned discussion topics related to cultures, and the students got to discuss and exchange their opinions on the subjects in multinational groups. Moreover, the Finnish language courses were recommended to involve the Finnish students in order to make the courses more interesting. The involvement of native students in a language course could be a motivation for the language learners.

## 6 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter discusses the empirical results, and proposes suggestions on future improvement in the internationalization-at-home (IaH) of Lahti UAS. The recommendations are based on the students' opinions collected from the survey and the interviews, as well as the author's own perspective. The chapter is dedicated to answering the research question "What can be done to improve internationalization-at-home of Lahti UAS?" Due to the fact that IaH includes international extra-curricular activities and internationalized curricular, the chapter is divided into two sections in which the two aspects are discussed separately. As these two aspects are very much related to each other, they are discussed interchangeably throughout this chapter.

### 6.1 International extra-curricular activities

The survey revealed that 85% of participants would like to be connected with students of different nationalities, which showed that there is a demand of international involvement throughout Lahti UAS. However, about half of the students in each faculty stated that they faced difficulties in getting to know their schoolmates from other cultures. This confirmed that the above problem was common in all faculties of Lahti UAS, not just in any particular faculty. The difficulties, which were revealed by the students themselves, raised a question on the effectiveness international extra-curricular activities provided by Lahti UAS. Lack of meeting opportunities was the most mentioned reason. Classroom is a place for student groups to interact with each other, while social activities outside the classroom also plays an important role in creating chances for students from different backgrounds to spend more time together. It is important to bear in mind that the main aim of the IaH is to help all students achieve international and intercultural dimensions (Nilsson 2003, 31-34; Steglitz and Briggs 2005, 11). According to the research, there was a possibility that the international activities and events had not involved all students of Lahti UAS. On the other hand, students might not be well

informed of which activities or events that could be beneficial to their international experience. Moreover, lack of cultural understanding creates the difficulty in interaction with students of different cultural backgrounds. Therefore, this emphasizes the crucial role of intercultural education where students can learn more of cultural differences, so that they are able to embrace people from around the world, and develop tolerance towards cultural diversities. Language barrier was also mentioned as an obstacle in the survey; particularly, students might feel uncomfortable when communicating in another language besides their mother tongues. In general, obstacles in connecting with foreigners may lead to a number of student hesitating to be involved in future international activities or events. Thus, it is crucial that there should be some actions in order to ease the hardness, to explain the positive sides of internationalization, and to encourage students to be active and motivated in building a multicultural learning and socializing environment at the Lahti UAS. The author suggests that there should be more common playgrounds for both native and international students (including both non-degree and degree ones). For instance, the common playground can be curricular courses which involves the Finnish and the international students, or activities whose themes are related to cultures, hobbies, or professions. The participants of the survey requested to have such events as travelling trips, cuisine events, and sport events. Additionally, Lahti UAS should make sure that such events and activities are well-organized, and on a regular basis. More importantly, they should involve all Lahti UAS students. In order to do so, it is better that the events or activities are organized in each faculty, and the organizers must ensure that the events or activities are well-marketed so that the information would reach all students. These extra-curricular activities not only provide multinational playground, but also aim to engage the students' interest in internationalization and cultural understanding. Furthermore, laH aims to ensure that returning students from international exchange programs have the possibility to integrate their international experience which they gained abroad into the learning environment at home university (Steglitz and Briggs 2005, 11). Hence,

such events that foster the IaH of Lahti UAS should give these students an opportunity to transfer their international experience and knowledge to home students who do not study abroad.

Regarding the survey question on the international student union, most of the positive comments were received from students of Faculty of Business. It can be easily understood because the number of respondents from Faculty of Business was higher, and there were more international students in this faculty than the others. This might tell that the internationalization at the Faculty of Business was maintained well, or perhaps, better than at other faculties.

Based on the positive answers from the students, Lahti UAS should consider having an association that dedicates to promoting internationalization among students. The international student union can also share with Lahti UAS the job of taking care of international students in terms of providing helps for new students, as well as strengthen the relationship between Lahti UAS and its foreign students. Additionally, the author believes that the idea of *“recruiting international students”* suggested by one respondent should be emphasized. This participant would like that the union would recruit international students to work for it in order to make those students feel that they are important and integrated with the university.

Concerning how to make the Niemi Campus multicultural, the author believes that it is important to have international and multicultural dimensions in all of the campuses of Lahti UAS, not only in Niemi Campus. Therefore, the participants' suggestions on how to make Niemi Campus multicultural could be employed to make the Niemi Campus and other campuses international learning environments. The suggestions are presently clearly in sub chapter 5.1.2 on page 61 – 63.

## 6.2 Internationalized curriculum

The outcomes of the interviews could probably benefit the current international education system and the internationalization of Lahti UAS with insightful opinions and feedbacks from its students. Based on the interviews and the students' perspectives, Lahti UAS has been attempting to create international learning environment for those students who are following the international programs by integrating the international and intercultural dimensions into their curriculums, and fostering interaction among them. However, other Bachelor's Degree Programs in Finnish might lack of international and intercultural dimensions. According to the interviewees from normal study programs, their profession curriculum did not include international and/or global aspects, and a majority of native students did not have many opportunities to meet or interact with international students via curricular activities at Lahti UAS. On the other hand, Lahti UAS is committed to ensuring all of its graduates gain international competence. Additionally, "*international activities and cooperation*" is emphasized as one of the learning outcomes to be achieved at Lahti UAS. (Lahti UAS 2015.) Although there is exchange programs available at Lahti UAS, but not all students participate in studies abroad. Therefore, more efforts should be put in providing the students with alternative international learning experience at home university.

The interviews proved that the students, themselves, understood the importance of internationalization, and the benefits that GII competencies could bring them. Professional knowledge on a global scale can be an advantage for students' future career in other countries. Intercultural competence enables the students to work and communicate in multicultural contexts. Additionally, studying with students from different nationalities can consolidate their GII competencies. The study curriculums at Lahti UAS can be altered or improved to educate and foster GII competencies of its students. First, professional courses should be designed to encourage the internationalization. All faculties can develop international focus courses for their students. The author believes these

courses should be compulsory to all students in order to ensure they would all receive global and international education. Secondly, as the need of cultural understanding has been confirmed by the interview results, intercultural education is essential in terms of developing the laH of Lahti UAS. As explained in sub chapter 2.1.3 on page 13, intercultural education consists of courses that are designed to emphasize cultures and intercultural aspects. It is important that all students gain basic knowledge on cultural diversity, different lifestyles, and customs around the world; so that they are able to tolerate cultural differences. However, in fact, there are students who are not interested in or unaware of intercultural competence. Hence, the goals of intercultural education are not only to transmit cultural knowledge to all students, but also to motivate them to learn cultures and ethnicity. Due to the fact that intercultural education also includes learning languages, language courses should be available to all students. At the moment, Lahti UAS has courses on several languages, but a majority of them have tuition only in Finnish. The author suggests that these courses should be available in English for international degree students because they are also a part of the student population of Lahti UAS.

Furthermore, mixing native and international students in a class is a good method to enhance multicultural experience of the students at home university. According to the interviewees' opinions, classes containing both Finnish and international students gave them the possibility to interact and work with students of different races. In multicultural classes, students can exchange different points of view, and widen their knowledge on cultures and languages. Additionally, students are given the opportunity to apply their cultural understanding in practical situation such as working in a multinational team. In such environment, the students are able to learn from each other. Therefore, all students at Lahti UAS should be given the possibility to study and work with students of different cultures. On the other hand, there are opposite opinions that some Finnish students may not be comfortable in having lectures with international students. In the author's opinion, it is best to first provide the students with basic cultural



understanding, and encourage their cultural tolerance via curricular courses on this matter. Interesting curricular activities can be integrated to cultural courses in order to motivate students in working with international people.

In terms of teaching methodologies, teachers' role is indispensable in international and intercultural education. They are responsible for not only teaching, but also inspiring and motivating their students. Although different teachers have different teaching styles, it is better to develop teaching guidelines which includes useful teaching techniques for particularly intercultural education. The teachers should follow the guidelines to ensure the basic effectiveness of international and cultural focus courses. In courses where there are Finnish and international students, multicultural interaction among students should be promoted and emphasized by the teachers. It is suggested that the teachers should divide the class into multinational groups instead of letting the students form the groups themselves. This is to promote intercultural interaction, and avoid students choose work with those of same nationalities.

## 7 CONCLUSION

This chapter presents the answers to the research questions concisely. Validity and reliability of the thesis are also explained. Moreover, further research ideas for developing the topic in the future are suggested.

### 7.1 Answers to research questions

The thesis provides data to solve the research problems. There are seven research questions, and their answers are shown in Table 16.

- **What is internationalization of higher education?**

Although several definitions of internationalization of higher education have been proposed, Knight's concepts are most often used in academic research. Internationalization of higher education is the process in which global, international, intercultural dimensions are integrated into the post-secondary education system. The process takes place on three levels, i.e. national, sector, and institutional levels. Internationalization of higher education has two streams, namely, internationalization abroad, and internationalization-at-home (IaH).

- **What is internationalization-at-home (IaH) of higher education?**

IaH is the integration of international and intercultural dimensions into curriculum and extra-curricular activities of a higher educational institute. IaH aims to foster global, international, and intercultural competencies (GII competencies) of all students at home learning environment.

TABLE 16. Answers to the research questions.

<b>Research question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
<b>What is internationalization of higher education?</b>	Internationalization of higher education is a process in which global, international, and intercultural dimensions are integrated into post-secondary education.
<b>What is internationalization-at-home (IaH) of higher education?</b>	IaH is the integration of international and intercultural dimensions into curriculum and extra-curricular activities at home university.
<b>What is the situation of cross-border higher education in Europe?</b>	European higher education has been reformed by the Bologna Process.
<b>What is the situation of internationalization of higher education in Finland?</b>	Internationalization of education has been emphasized by Finnish policy makers. Around 95% of Finnish students of higher education are non-mobile students.
<b>What is Lahti UAS's international strategy in terms of education?</b>	Lahti UAS aims to provide quality international education, and a multicultural learning environment to its students.
<b>What are students' opinions about the IaH of Lahti UAS (international extra-curricular activities and internationalized curriculum)?</b>	There is a shortage of opportunities to foster interaction among native and international students. Undergraduate programs lack of international and intercultural dimensions.
<b>What can be done to improve IaH of Lahti UAS?</b>	The solution is to develop both international extra-curricular activities and internationalized curriculum of Lahti UAS simultaneously.

- **What is the situation of cross-border higher education in Europe?**

The cross-border higher education of Europe has been improving since the establishment of the Bologna Process. The Bologna Process reorganizes, improves, and harmonizes the higher education systems in Europe. Thus, it helps promote the cross-border higher education in European countries. The main achievements of the Bologna Process reforms include the Bologna three-cycle structure (Bachelor-Master-PhD), the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), the Diploma Supplement.

- **What is the situation of internationalization of higher education in Finland?**

Finland, as a member of the Bologna Process, has its post-secondary education reformed to meet the requirements. As a result, internationalization of education has been emphasized by Finnish policy makers. The reforms encourage the growth of international mobility. Finnish higher education attracts a remarkable number of foreign students every year. However, the amount of Finnish students head abroad for studying remains low (for example, only 5.2% in 2012).

- **What is Lahti UAS's international strategy in terms of education?**

Lahti UAS aims at improving the degree programs and activities so that they can meet international standards. It is committed to providing quality international contents, as well as fostering multicultural learning environment in all study programs. Lahti UAS's undergraduate students are equipped with GII competencies after completing their study degrees. Annually, around 9 – 13% of Lahti UAS students head abroad for studying. This means a majority of Lahti UAS students might rely mostly on the institute's education and activities in order to achieve GII competencies.

- **What are students' opinions about the IaH of Lahti UAS (international extra-curricular activities and internationalized curriculum)?**

According to the students' opinions collected by the research, the lack of extra-curricular opportunities to foster interaction among native and international students at Lahti UAS is confirmed. Students face difficulties in building social networks with schoolmates of different races. The need of having an international student union to promote internationalization at Lahti UAS is emphasized. Moreover, students point out that undergraduate programs should include international and intercultural dimensions. Students perceive that international professional courses and cultural courses are beneficial to them. Courses involving Finnish and international students enable the participants to learn more and develop their intercultural skills.

- **What can be done to improve IaH of Lahti UAS?**

As internationalized curriculum and extra-curricular activities have an interrelationship in which they affect one another. As a result, in order to improve IaH, Lahti UAS should make an effort in enhancing these two pillars at the same time. Knowledge of internationalization and cultures which students learn from curricular courses can be applied to social networking via extra-curricular opportunities. Intercultural experiences which are gained from extra-curricular activities give the students confidence and comfort in working and studying with people from around the world.

## 7.2 Validity and reliability

The literature review and statistical data of the thesis is collected via published books, academic journals, reports, and trustworthy internet sources. The information sources which have been published recently are used in order to ensure that the thesis is up-to-date. Furthermore, the

survey and interviews were designed and implemented by the author herself. The empirical results were recorded, transcribed, and translated carefully. The data analyses are based on real answers of the participants. Additionally, the survey was done during the ***Multicultural Niemi Campus Project*** in spring 2014, and the author is authorized to use the materials from this project for her thesis. Therefore, this work is considered to be valid.

In terms of reliability, knowledge and statistical data are gathered from trusted authors and organizations that are relevant to education sector. The survey and interviews were designed to collect objective data. The semi-structured interviews were carried out at places where privacy was ensured so that the interviewees were confident to tell the truth. The research was done with Lahti UAS students; hence, the participants are qualified to provide primary data to answer the research problems concerning the case organization. Moreover, if the research is repeated in another point of time, the results will not change. The results from both the survey and the interviews support the outcomes of the thesis, as well as enhancing their reliability. As a result, the thesis is reliable.

### 7.3 Suggestions for future research

The internationalization-at-home is surely a wide topic, where there are still room for further research such as benchmarking. Future research should benchmark the best practices on how HEIs around the world improve their IaH. In addition, as IaH involves not only the students, but also the teachers and the staff members of a HEI, it is important to research the matter on the staff level. In other words, perspectives of teachers and employees of Lahti UAS should be taken into consideration in order to produce relevant enhancements that meet expectations of both students and staff members. Another suggestion of future research is to study the opinions of Lahti UAS's international students about Finnish speaking environment. Their reactions and adaptations to such environment can be useful to enhance the IaH.

## 8 SUMMARY

Globalization affects higher education systems around the world. Under globalization influences, nowadays, labor force is demanded to possess international and intercultural skills, movements among countries are freer, and more people are interested in studying abroad. Higher education has to response to the trend by developing international dimension. Europe and the Bologna Process is the concrete example of successful integration of internationalization into higher education. Finland, as a member of the Bologna Process, has been reforming its post-secondary system to meet the requirements. Students should be able to gain global, international, intercultural (GII) competencies by taking part in studies abroad and/or internationalization-at-home (IaH) programs. In fact, the number of Finnish students in higher education took part in abroad programs is relatively low. This raises the questions of how non-mobile students can achieve GII competencies. The thesis takes Lahti University of Applied Sciences (Lahti UAS) as the research case.

The research applies deductive approach which utilizes both qualitative and quantitative techniques (multiple method) to gather primary data. Secondary data comes from trusted information sources such as published books, journals, and reports of organizations in education sector. The research problems and research methodologies are explained in the first chapter.

This work provides basic knowledge concerning the internationalization of higher education, as well as other related educational terminologies. Particularly, the definition of IaH is noteworthy. IaH, which is one of the two streams of internationalization of higher education, emphasizes the international and intercultural dimensions of formal and informal curriculum of a HEI. IaH helps foster GII competencies of students at home university environments.

Lahti UAS, as an international educator, is committed to ascertaining all of its graduates are globally, internationally, and inter-culturally competent.

Thus, IaH becomes an important issue since there are only around 9 – 13% of its students enroll to international exchange programs every year. The research aims to find out how to improve IaH of Lahti UAS based on students' perspectives. Survey technique was employed to collect Lahti UAS students' opinions about extra-curricular activities, and semi-structured interview was used to gain insightful opinions of students about the internationalized curriculum. The results of the research are first analyzed. The discussion and recommendation are made based on the research findings and the author's own perspective.

In conclusion, the thesis confirmed the importance of IaH at Lahti UAS. Although Lahti UAS is on its right track in improving its internationalization, more efforts should be paid to create an international and intercultural learning environment. Moreover, further research suggested are benchmarking best practices of how HEIs around the world enhance their IaH, and future empirical research should include perspectives of different groups such as international students, teachers, and staff members.



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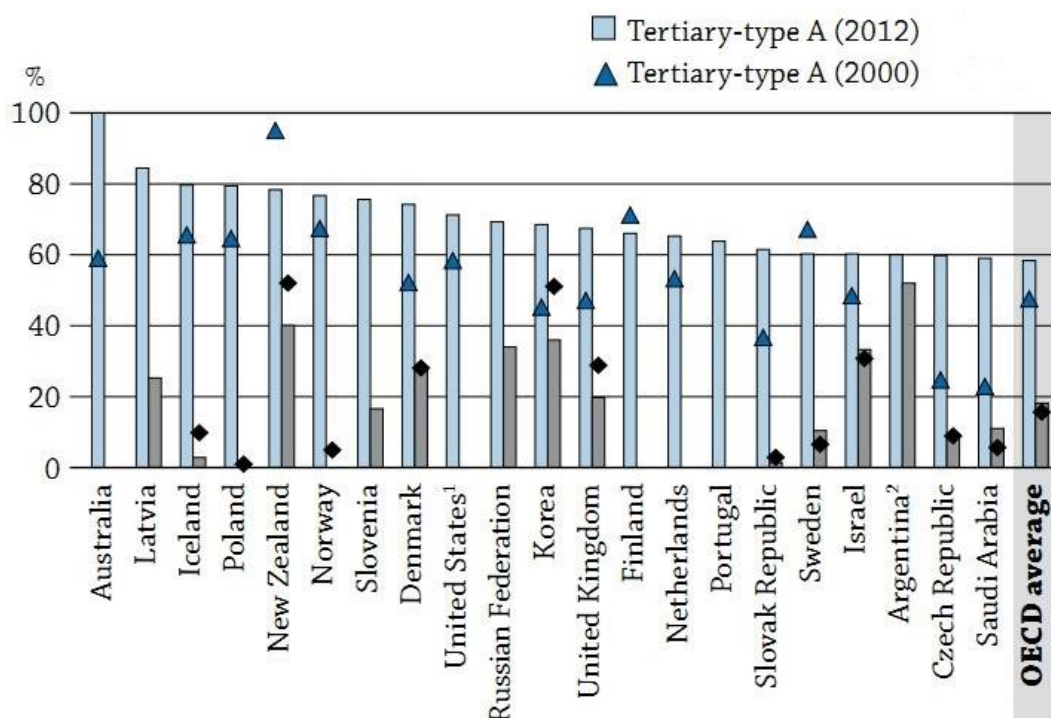
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## APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. Entry rates into tertiary-type A education in 2000 and 2012 (OECD 2014, 332).



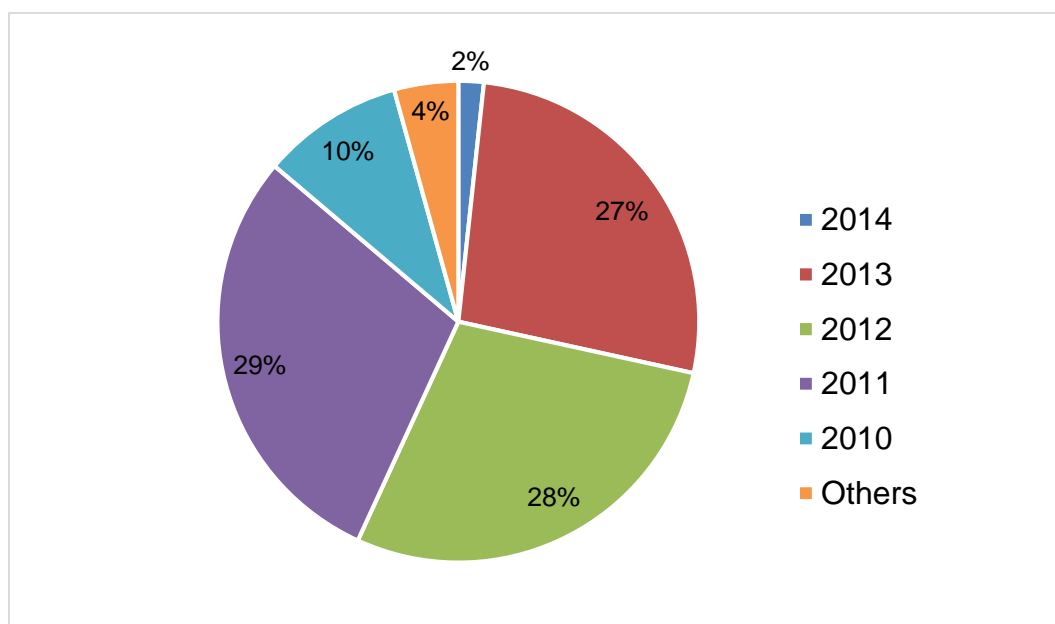
APPENDIX 2. The number of incoming and outgoing students for short term internship and exchange programs of Lahti UAS from 2010 – 2014 (Vipunen 2015).

Year	Outgoing students for internship	Outgoing students for exchange program	Incoming students for internship	Incoming students for exchange program
2010	54	150	11	136
2011	76	187	10	159
2012	79	194	2	151
2013	75	239	0	158
2014	59	185	2	186

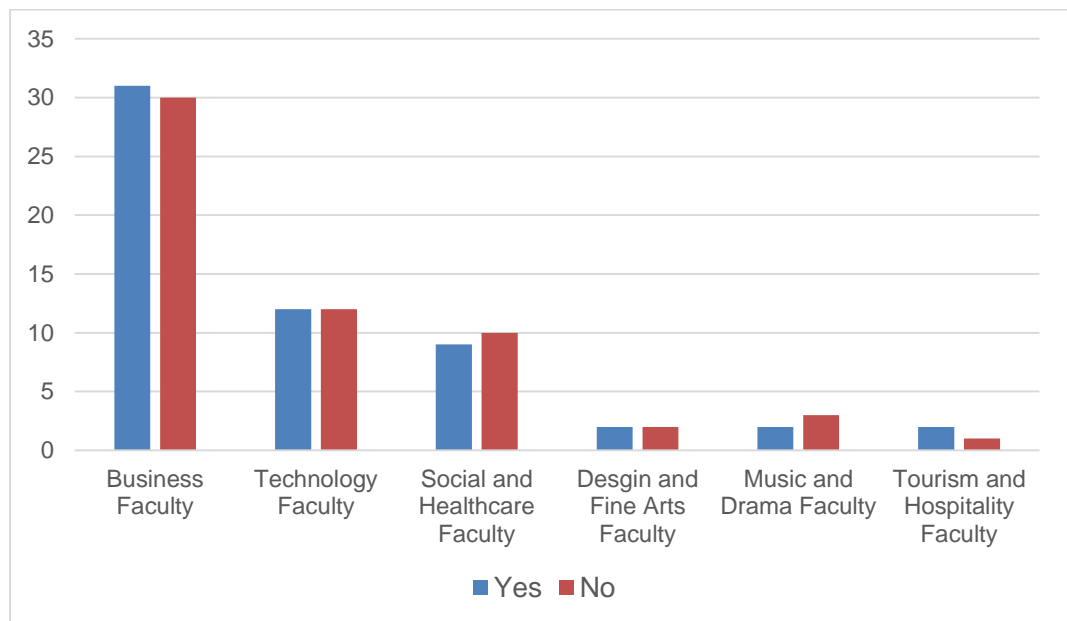
APPENDIX 3. The number of incoming and outgoing students for over-three-month exchange programs of Lahti UAS from 2010 – 2014 (Vipunen 2015).

Year	Outgoing students for exchange program	Incoming students for exchange program
2010	270	95
2011	293	78
2012	246	135
2013	356	63
2014	313	337

APPENDIX 4. The respondents by starting year of program at Lahti UAS.



APPENDIX 5. “Do you find it hard to connect with foreign students?” by faculty.



## APPENDIX 6. Survey questionnaire.

### Part 1: Background information

1. Where are you from?

- ☐ America
- ☐ China
- ☐ Finland
- ☐ Germany
- ☐ India
- ☐ Kenya
- ☐ Nigeria
- ☐ Russia
- ☐ Vietnam
- ☐ Other

2. In which faculty are you studying?

- ☐ Business
- ☐ Design and fine arts
- ☐ Social and healthcare
- ☐ Technology
- ☐ Tourism and hospitality
- ☐ Music and drama

3. Which year did you start your studies at Lahti UAS?

- ☐ 2014
- ☐ 2013
- ☐ 2012
- ☐ 2011
- ☐ 2010
- ☐ Other

### Part 2: International extra-curricular activities

4. Do you want to connect with students of different nationalities?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

5. Do you find it hard to connect with students of different nationalities?

☐ Yes

☐ No

6. If yes, would you kindly provide the reason why it is hard to connect with students of different nationalities?

7. How do you usually meet new friends?

(you can choose as many as you want)

☐ Social parties

☐ Mainly through online social networks (e.g. Facebook, Twitter)

☐ Academic and professional events (e.g. career fair, competition)

☐ Outside campus activities (e.g. Multi-Culti organization)

☐ Others

8. Which event/activity would you like to participate in to meet new people?

(you can choose as many as you want)

☐ Travelling trips (organized by LAMKO)

☐ International Food Festival (hosted by Business Faculty)

☐ DunniExpo (hosted by Lahti UAS)

☐ Winter Wonderland (hosted by Niemi Campus)

☐ Happy Valentine (hosted by LAMKO at Tivoli)

☐ Lectures at school

☐ Lahti Service Jam (hosted by Entre Akatemia)

☐ Others

9. Do you wish to have an international student union at Lahti UAS?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ I do not care

10. What do you expect from the international student union at Lahti UAS?

11. What would you suggest to make Niemi Campus more multicultural?

## APPENDIX 7. Interview questions.

1. How long have you studied at Lahti UAS? What is your study program?

### **A. LAHTI UAS RELATED QUESTIONS**

2. Why did you choose Lahti UAS? What were your expectations from Lahti UAS (regarding education and activities)?

3. In your opinion, is Lahti UAS an international HEI? Why and why not?

### **B. INTERNATIONALIZED CURRICULUM**

4. In your study program, are there compulsory courses that have international focus/subjects (such as globalization, internationalization, and cultural topics)? Have you participated in elective courses that have international focus/subject?

5. How did you find out about these courses? What were your expectations from these courses?

6. How were these courses' atmosphere, curriculum? What did the teacher do to provide you with international learning environment?

7. How are courses that have international and cultural focus/subject beneficial to you?

8. What do you think of mixing native and international students in a course? Does this benefit your international learning experience? How? Did the teacher utilize the mix of native and international students in their class?

### **C. SUGGESTIONS**

9. What can be done to improve and develop the international and cultural focus courses?

10. What are your suggestions on how Lahti UAS can improve international learning environment and experience for its students?